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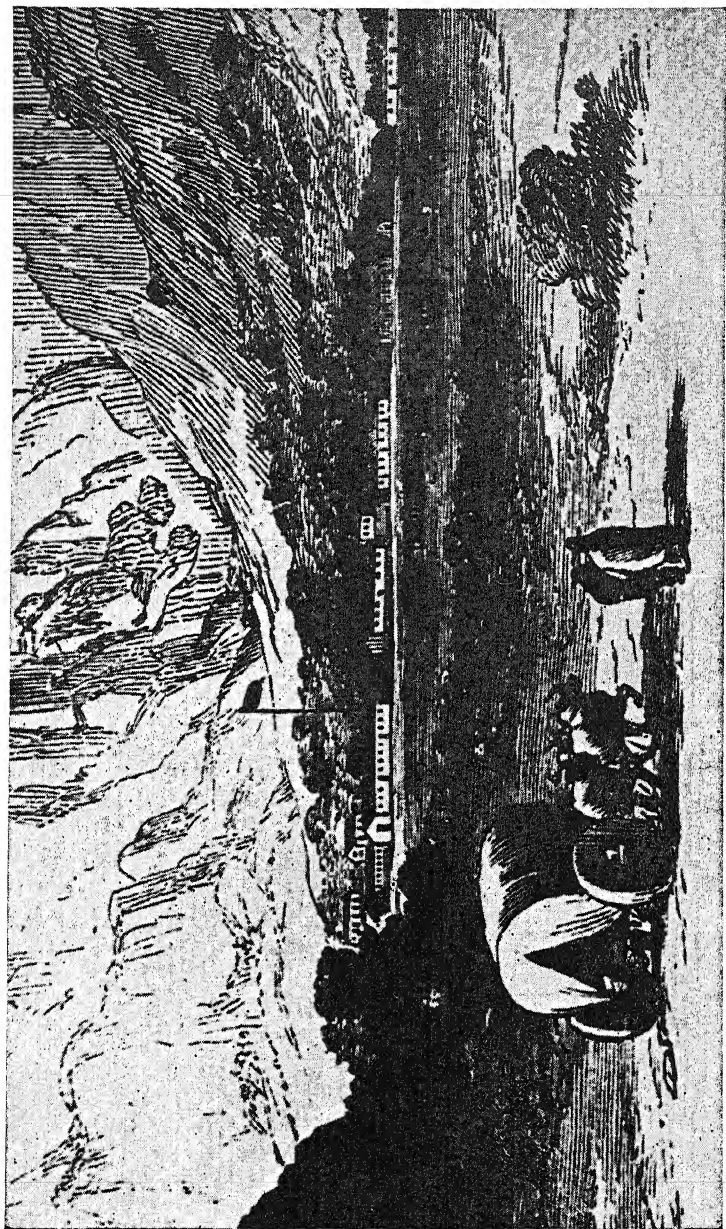
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OLD FORT DAVIS



OLD FORT DAVIS

OLD FORT DAVIS

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By

BARRY SCOBEE

25

THE NAYLOR COMPANY

San Antonio, Texas

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GENERAL WESLEY MERRITT, 1866

CHAPTER 1

THE FIRST WHITE MEN

ON AUGUST 13, 1583, the cottonwood trees in Limpia Canyon, where the old Army pumphouse now stands, spread their shade over a party of weary Europeans who had stopped for a rest and to record their adventures in the wild and unknown country now known as the Trans-Pecos. Antonio de Espejo, the young Spanish lieutenant, Diego Perez de Luxan, his chronicler, and their followers, were undoubtedly the first white men to see the two mountains and the box canyon we know as Old Fort Davis.

Espejo — or Tony, as his intimates called him — was a young Spanish lieutenant in Mexico on colonizing business for the King of Spain. He was an adventurous fellow with eyes eager for the new country. Far to the north in the native settlements around the present site of Santa Fe, New Mexico, the Franciscan religionists were toiling and moiling, and word came back to the Spaniards on the west coast of Mexico that three of their padres were missing among the Indians. No doubt inspired by the same spirit that today sends planes and ships in search of missing fliers and explorers, Espejo, or his superiors, applied to the King of Spain for permission to search for the missing men. Legend has it that the King refused. Perhaps he did not care to lose more colonists. But whether he refused or not, the fact is that Lieutenant Tony bundled up an expedition and started for Santa Fe. Across the empty desert he went, with Luxan, his chronicler, fifteen soldiers, and one hundred horses and asses.

The party crossed the Rio Grande in the vicinity of what is now Presidio, and jaunted northward to Alpine and Fort Stockton, more than two hundred years before those towns were born. On the march they encountered Indians who told of other white men passing through the region nearly half a century before. They undoubtedly referred to the remnant of Cabeza de Vaca's party, which had passed that way in the early 1530's. Cabeza de Vaca, however, had traveled from the Fort Stockton country to the Rio Grande, bypassing to the east the future site of Fort Davis and leaving the honor of being the first white men there to Antonio de Espejo and his followers.

The indomitable lieutenant had traveled from the great flowing springs later known as Comanche Springs, at the site of Fort Stockton, on to the Pecos River, struggling through the heat and briars, the silence and desolation, to Pecos Pueblo in the Santa Fe country. But he had failed to find the missing friars; history records that they had been slain by the Indians; and Espejo had turned back toward his home in Mexico.

Now Tony, having run off without the King's permission, was feeling like a schoolboy who had dallied and was late for supper, and he wished to get back to his chores in Mexico before he was too much missed. He took all the short cuts possible. On the alkaline flats in the Pecos country he found two or three Indians gathering salt to peddle to other red men and, with a few baubles, Tony persuaded the saltgatherers to guide his party by the shortest route to the Rio Grande. The anxious homeward-bound party traveled up Toyah Creek, passed the great San Solomon Spring in the present Balmorhea State Park, went on to Phantom Lake and into Big Aguja Canyon, then across the hills into Limpia Canyon and on up to the site of the future United States military post.

There cannot be the slightest doubt of the route. It has been traced from Luxan's chronicles of the journey, which were found in the dust of Mexican and Spanish archives. He described the vegetation, the wild cherries, grapes, and holm oaks, and told the number of leagues traveled. The

path has been retraced by J. Charles Kelley and by others, both historians and laymen.

And so those early hikers, with what was left of their now scrawny animals, made their way up Limpia Canyon on August 13, 1583, to the cottonwood grove that now gives gracious shade along the highway on the north side of the Old Fort property. Anyone standing today near the old Army pumphouse and well, built of stone, wonders if the gnarled cottonwoods there were bright young saplings when Tony and his followers trudged that way.

After the party had continued a short distance up Limpia Canyon, the Indian guides pointed lean, smoke-stained fingers to another canyon, or valley, coming in from the west, now called Keesey Canyon. The weary travelers turned up this canyon, little knowing that three and a half centuries in the future the land they crossed would be a state park with its Indian Lodge built by the Civilian Conservation Corps. They topped out at the head of Keesey and went across what Luxan calls a vast plain, finally reaching Mexico in the vicinity of Presidio and Ojinaga, with a long trip still ahead of them before they could put their knees under their own tables down in the West Coast country of Mexico.

Unfortunately Luxan could not linger with his quill to jot down facts about the coming of other white men. And who were the next white men to come striding out of civilization to gaze with discovering eyes at the peaks and purple canyons under the blue, blue skies doming the Davis Mountains?

The years from 1820 to the Civil War galloped with adventure and exploration, particularly in the fur trade. St. Louis companies, searching eagerly for new, lush regions, had trappers in Texas and on the Rio Grande. It is hardly probable that these buckskin-befringed, long-rifled men missed the Davis Mountains.

In 1839 a freighting outfit from Mexico crossed the Rio Grande at Presidio and rolled northward to skirt, but not to explore, the Davis range. This outfit passed through Limpia Canyon, carrying silver bullion as part of their cargo.

In 1941 Texas state highway engineers discovered at Rockpile, high up in the mountains thirty-three miles west of Fort Davis, the name of Kit Carson carved on a huge

boulder, with the date December 25, 1839, below it. A search of books about the famous Indian-country scout and guide indicates that he could have been there at that time. Moreover, the site was once a considerable Indian camp and Indian pictographs can be found there today. Wherever Indians lived in the Southwest, Carson went.

Word-of-mouth history indicates that when white men first appeared, there was a settlement near the present Fort Davis composed mostly of crop-planting Indians with traces of Spanish blood among them. Thirty-five or forty years ago an honorable old Mexican named Manuel Rodriguez told the late Walter S. Miller that there was a legend among the people of his race that back in the hazy past, such a settlement had existed. The location was near the present Harold G. Thompson apple orchard on Limpia Creek north of town. There highway builders have found the remains of some very old graves, and on February 4, 1936, workmen by chance dug into a grave five feet deep and found two human skeletons buried feet to feet, with the head of one pointing northeast and that of the other, southwest.

In the latter 1840's United States troops passed through this area and established a frontier fort at El Paso, then called Franklin. Gold was discovered in California in 1848, and by 1849 the vanguard of that vast Anglo-Saxon horde of gold hunters and adventurers was making its amazing sweep westward to the enchanted land of riches. But the road to enchantment lay across the western desert, and many of the travelers, along with their oxen and horses, perished of thirst and from the hardships of the trail. Many were lost because there was no road to follow, and many died under the arrows and tomahawks of the wild Comanches, Apaches and Lipans.

To aid these hapless travelers who kept coming and coming, the government ordered a military survey to find a "water route" through west Texas. This water route was not for steamboats or even canoes, but was to mark the sites of springs and streams that would serve to provide drinking water for man and beast.

CHAPTER 2

THE MAIL GOES WEST

JOSEPH E. JOHNSTON, then a colonel of the Topographical Engineers and later commanding general of the Armies of the Southern Confederacy, was placed in charge of the work of surveying the "water route." Four officers of the Topographical Engineers were to supervise the work: Lieutenants N. Michler, W. H. C. Whiting, F. T. Bryan, and William F. Smith. They had as an escort a battalion from the Third U. S. Infantry.

The work train of wagons left San Antonio May 4, 1849, and, having reached the Pecos River, they surveyed two alternate routes to El Paso, one of which followed up the Pecos to Horse Head Crossing and thence north of the mountains via Huaco Tanks to El Paso. The other route left the Pecos at Live Oak Creek and followed the Indian trail to Comanche Springs, then to Ojo de Leon Springs.

After leaving Ojo de Leon the party saw the lofty mountains in the distance and, after a long day's travel, they entered Limpia Canyon. Here the limestone formations which they had been crossing for some days disappeared and the mountains of igneous rock took their place. The canyon at this point was wide enough to be termed a valley, and the foothills and the mountains in the distance were clothed with green trees and grass. The engineers progressed fifteen miles up Limpia Canyon until they came to Wild Rose Pass with its almost vertical walls one thousand feet high. From here they proceeded on up the canyon, crossing the stream bed about once each mile. When the party reached the pres-

ent site of the old Army pumphouse, a group of Indians who had their village beside the stream fled up the mountainside. It was a *rancheria* of the Apaches, and along the banks of the creek were lodges constructed of willow sticks bent in the form of an arc and interlaced at the top, after the general custom of the Apaches. Here the troops found ditches conveying water from the Limpia to small fields of corn. No particular effort was made to interfere with the Indians or to identify them, as it was obvious from the construction of their village that they were Mescalero Apaches.

On this same site where the Apaches cultivated their little fields of corn and stood guard over their ancestral home in the Davis Mountains, the Comanches had pitched their Painted Camp as they trekked from Oklahoma and the Texas Panhandle to Mexico; in this same vicinity was the original little settlement that Manuel Rodriguez told about, called "La Limpia."

The troops now having pushed to the wild frontier at El Paso, and the westward gold trek being under way, commercial possibilities opened up for shrewd and hardy men. Great wagons trains began to roll from San Antonio, Indianola, and other eastward centers over the long road that passed through the Davis Mountains. Broad-tired, high-wheeled wagons, common prairie schooners, and Concord coaches all made a stopping point at the future site of the Fort.

The long road from the Texas coast to California running through the Davis Mountains was called the Overland Trail. The towns nearest to La Limpia were San Antonio, 475 miles to the east, and El Paso, 220 miles to the west. South to Mexico from La Limpia ran another road destined to play its part in commerce and war — the Chihuahua Trail.

When in 1850 the Postoffice contracted with Henry Skillman to haul the mail over that part of the Overland Route that lay between San Antonio and El Paso, it was necessary that Skillman establish stage stands or stations for the accommodation of travelers and the frequent changes of horse and mule teams that drew the stages. Such a stand was established at the present JEF ranch site thirty miles or so north of Fort Davis; one much nearer the townsite, apparently close by that old original settlement where the feet-to-feet

burials were found in 1936; another twenty miles to the west at Barrel Springs; and still another at El Muerto or Dead Man's waterhole, the rock ruins of which are still plain to be seen. At each of these stations was a tender, to look after the stage animals and the passengers.

The stage stands were all built on the same plan. They were of adobe and placed on a site of ground from which the stage tender could see hundreds of yards in every direction. There was an entrance which could be barred, and on each side was a large room at the rear of which was a corral to accommodate the teams. The walls of the corral were twelve to fifteen feet high, also made of adobe, and two or three feet thick. One of the large rooms was used for cooking and heating, and the other for sleeping quarters and storeroom. The company furnished the tender with supplies and he cooked the meals for the passengers, charging fifty cents per meal, which he was allowed to keep as part of his compensation. When the stage reached the station, the tender opened the gates, and the untamed Spanish mules dashed into the corral. After the mules were unhitched, the men would turn the stagecoach by hand, pointing it toward the entrance for the next run. Fresh mules were hitched, the gates swung open, and at a yell from the driver and the crack of his whip, the mules dashed out heading for the next stand.

As soon as he had located his stations, Henry Skillman made ready to carry out his mail contract. The initial run was made in a Concord coach drawn by six mules and guarded by an escort of eighteen mounted Indian fighters under the command of Big Foot Wallace. The party made the 693-mile trip from San Antonio to El Paso in thirty days and without Indian attacks, due unquestionably to the presence of the celebrated Indian fighter and his men.

One incident of that first trip has been preserved. The party had reached the Davis Mountains and had progressed up Limpia Canyon to the vicinity of Wild Rose Pass, where the walls of volcanic rock rose to a height of one thousand feet above their heads. Scanning the horizon watchfully, Big Foot Wallace saw a large buck deer grazing on a nearby mountain top. He raised his rifle and fired. At the shot, the buck plunged over the cliff, with a minor rock slide following in his wake. Down the mountain it came, landing almost

under the prancing feet of the frightened stagecoach mules. Big Foot looked at his game and said, "Them's the first mountains I ever seen where the game comes to heel after being killed."

Two of the guards who rode with Big Foot Wallace on that first trip were the first white settlers of La Limpia, Diedrick Dutchover and E. P. Webster. Webster remained at Limpia as the first stage tender there, but Dutchover continued to ride as a guard for two more years.

The stage company had contracted to put three mails a week over the east-west route. But history relates that they were lucky to get one through, because the Indians were forever attacking the stages and cargo trains for loot and scalps, guns and horses. The station tenders were also harassed constantly by the enterprising Indians, and many were killed. Military posts had been established along the Overland Trail east of the Pecos. This put increasing pressure on the Comanches, the fierce plains Indians, which they in turn passed on to their inveterate enemies, the Apaches. The Apaches had one of their main *rancherias* in the Davis Mountains, which they were determined to hold against the ever-increasing tide of whites coming from the east. This made the Limpia Canyon one of the most dangerous spots on the Overland Trail. No man's life was safe there, and repeated demands were sent to Washington urging the War Department to establish a military post at that point for the protection of the mail and the travelers.

CHAPTER 3

THE FORT IS LOCATED

*J*EFFERSON DAVIS was appointed as Secretary of War of the United States on March 7, 1853. He heard and heeded the demands for military aid, ordering the establishment of a post at some practicable location in the Davis Mountains region, the heart of the Mescalero Apache country. Pursuant to this, orders came down military channels for troops in Texas to march westward and locate the post.

In the summer or early autumn of 1854 Lieutenant Colonel Washington Seawell, a native of Virginia, left Fort Ringgold, Texas, and moved west with the headquarters, commissioned staff, non-commissioned staff, band, and companies A, C, D, F, G and H of the Eighth United States Infantry, arriving on the Limpia October 3 of that year. Those troops have been described as "mounted infantry," but since a letter from the War Department in 1934 states that nothing has been found of record to show that the Eighth Infantry was mounted at that time, perhaps the description arose from the necessity for the troops to mount horses and mules in order to pursue the Indians from the Fort Davis base.

A perusal of the detailed records of the Eighth Infantry reveals that the troops who arrived in October, 1854, were not the first soldiers of that regiment either on the Limpia or at the site of Fort Davis. On October 6, 1853, Companies B, E, I and K left Fort Clark and camped on the Limpia on December 30, leaving the place on January 2, 1854, and

arriving at El Paso on January 11, "where they constructed Fort Bliss."

Further, the six companies that came later that year appear to have been strewed all over creation when they were ordered to march to the Limpia and establish a post. Apparently they did not all get together until they assembled in a camp on the Rio Pecos on September 30, and from there they marched as a unit.

The purpose of the establishment of the post, according to the Army order, was "for the protection of the mail, emigrants and settlers." But there was only one actual settler in the whole region thereabouts, and he was Milton Favor, the first cattleman in West Texas. His ranch was fifty or so miles south of the fort, in what is now the Shafter country. There a mountain called F Mountain is his monument.

However, there were people, although not agricultural or cattlemen settlers, who needed protection. These were the stage tenders, the stagecoach drivers, freight haulers, mule skimmers, and, above all, the passengers and westward-bound settlers.

Whether in saddle or afoot that October day, the officers, the grizzled Irish veterans, and the boys from the East, who made up the six companies of the Eighth, met the ambushed arrows of the redskins shortly after they reached La Limpia Creek. There they found running, clear, sweet drinking water and pools in which to wash off the dust and sweat of their dry marching. The Irish — and there were many of them in our frontier armies — in their exuberance admitted that the stream reminded them of the brooks of the "auld country" and declared the "haythen Injuns" were not so tough as the English soldiery. The six companies met Indian resistance all the way up the Canyon for four days, until one side of the canyon opened and permitted them to debouch into a fair region of grassy meadows, then known as Painted Comanche Camp — the charming site of present Fort Davis, if you please.

The day of arrival was October 7, 1854. Colors, regimental and national, were staffed before the commander's tent, not far from the running creek, and that night the listening solitudes of the mountains heard clear music on the wind when the bugler sounded Retreat, Tattoo, Call-to-

quarters, and the long sweet notes of Taps. The band probably played at sunset for the evening Retreat, and no doubt curious wary Indians lurked close by, watching and listening from their hiding places.

A courier must have been dispatched at once for San Antonio to inform department headquarters of the arrival at the Painted Camp, for Special Order No. 129, Department of Texas, was issued by Brevet Major General Persifor F. Smith to "Painted Camp on the Limpia, October 23, 1854," in these words:

"Lieutenant Colonel Washington Seawell, with his command of six companies of Eighth Infantry, will occupy the camp where he is at present in position, which will be called Fort Davis, where he will proceed to make his command as comfortable as circumstances will admit of for the winter. He will immediately make requisition for the necessary stores, provisions, and forage for the half year commencing November 1st next, drawing as little as possible upon the forage already and about to be delivered. Preparations will be made for an additional quantity of provisions, supplies, and forage for detachments which may shortly be expected for service in the field."

Thus the faraway, lonely outpost of Anglo-Saxon civilization was named in honor of the Secretary of War who had ordered its establishment. Records in the War Department in Washington contain a report by Assistant Surgeon D. Weisel, which quotes Order No. 129 above, sets forth the location of Fort Davis, and says that Fort Davis was named after Jefferson Davis, then Secretary of War, and the location was selected because of its communication with San Antonio and El Paso by a fine natural road, its fine climate, its defensibility, and its vicinity to the favorite haunts of the wild Indian tribes. Another statement says further that the site was chosen because of the salubrious climate and pure water.

If one wishes to be as militarily precise as a regular Army corporal, why, the exact location of Fort Davis was, and presumably is, Latitude 30°36'23" north, and Longitude 103°36'45" west. Getting away from parallels and meridians, various War Department documents say that the post was about 475 miles northwest of San Antonio and 220 miles southeast of El Paso, at an altitude of 4,700 feet. Paved roads

have considerably shortened the mileage that those old wagons and stagecoaches traveled, through dust and mud and flood, while a later survey adds 200 feet to the elevation above sea level. A U. S. Coast & Geodetic Survey bronze marker in the door of Jeff Davis County Court House in Fort Davis says "Elev. 4,900," and the adjoining Fort property, with its two mountains, rises many hundred feet higher.

All these figures probably concerned Colonel Seawell not at all in that 1854 October. Very likely his biggest concern was how he could make his people even halfway comfortable for the winter, and where, exactly, to put his buildings.

He did not put them where the present buildings are. Instead, the new post was built in the box canyon now known as Hospital Canyon, which is just west and behind the present Officers' Line. The old documents describe the "canon" as "about 3-4s mile long and 400 yds. wide at its mouth, gradually narrowing to its termination in a recess of the mountains . . . which . . . on either side are formed of metamorphic rocks about 250 ft. high, very rough and precipitous and covered with grass and small oak trees . . . while . . . the surrounding country is wild and barren, without trees . . . except a few cottonwoods on the Limpia."

One thinks of the land away out in the Indian country as being completely unowned, and of Colonel Seawell and his men as craning around, like turkeys in a strange lot, for a suitable site on which to plant their structures. Perhaps it wasn't like that at all. Second Lieutenant Thomas M. Jones, regimental quartermaster of the Eighth Infantry, made a report in June, 1857, relative to the establishment of Fort Davis. In it he says that Fort Davis was established by Lieutenant Colonel Washington Seawell, and adds that the site was selected by General P. F. Smith. Had General Smith been out ahead of Seawell to pick the site, or was he relying on the earlier survey of Colonel Joseph E. Johnston? Who knows?

Then there was the little matter of who owned the land. The answer concerns John James of San Antonio, who was a Texas land surveyor in those days. The records show that on January 6, 1838, Barnard E. Bee, Secretary of War for the Republic of Texas, issued to one A. L. Lewis an unlocated

balance of a bounty warrant for military service calling for 640 acres of land. Lewis sold the warrant to a Martin Hardin on March 12, 1838. Hardin sold it to John James on November 28 the same year. James must have kept it stowed away in the bottom of his trunk for many a year, for he did not use it until 1854.

The records in the office of the Jeff Davis County Clerk show that the Texas Land Commissioners issued a certificate of filing for the fort site section to James on May 19, 1854, nearly five months before the troops arrived. To file on it he must have run lines around it prior to the date of filing, so he could describe it by metes and bounds, which was done, a 12-inch cottonwood being named as one mark.

James leased the section to the United States, through Lieutenant A. C. Myers, for twenty years, or as long as it might be required for military purposes, on October 7, 1854 — the very day the troops arrived! The lease was at the rate of \$300 a year, payable monthly, with the War Department having the right to purchase within five years at \$10 an acre, or \$20 an acre after the five-year period and before the expiration of the lease.

Was John James here on that October 7 to make the lease? He kept a "Land Book," a sort of diary, still in possession of his descendants in San Antonio, which shows that he left San Antonio in July, 1854, with a train of beef cattle on the hoof "bound for the old town of San Diego, California," accompanied by about fifty men — cartmen, muleteers, cowboys, and suchlike gentry. He came up Limpia Canyon, through Wild Rose Pass, to Fort Davis site, then went on to El Paso, or Franklin, or McGoffin'sville, as it was perhaps called by that time. His record says that he returned to San Antonio via New York and Halifax, Nova Scotia, his old home.

This indicates he reached California with his herd and made the return journey by water around the Horn or through Panama. Did it require from July to October for his party to travel from San Antonio to Fort Davis, or had he already passed there by October 7? Was he there to make the lease on that day, or was the lease dated from the day of occupation at a later time? All of which is just a bit of curiosity as to how business was transacted in those days

nearly one hundred years ago. The same Jeff Davis County land records show, in neat Spencerian script, that James patented the 640 acres on August 23, 1856, on the basis of the Lewis bounty warrant.

Whatever the exact time and circumstances of choosing the section, it was on that land that Colonel Seawell proceeded "to make his command as comfortable as circumstances would admit of for the winter." We now have the soldiers on location, busy as ants and bees and beavers getting ready for the winter cold in the remote West Texas wilderness.

CHAPTER 4

THE FORT IS BUILT

UNDER THE DIRECTION of General Winfield Scott, hero of the War of 1812, the Mexican War, and the Civil War, then commanding the Armies of the United States, Colonel Joseph K. F. Mansfield, Inspector General of the Army, made a minute inspection of the Department of Texas. This Department consisted of the entire military establishment in Texas with the exception of the Army posts in El Paso County, which were attached to the Department of New Mexico. Colonel Mansfield was engaged in his inspection from March 31 to September 5, 1856, and we are indebted to him for an interesting and detailed report on the first buildings and activities at Fort Davis.

Trees had been stripped from the surrounding mountain-side and cut into rude boards at a sawmill located in the rear of the box canyon. The work had been done by the soldiers themselves, supplemented by the few civilian carpenters and smiths who were available. Undoubtedly they toiled from sun to sun working on their rude shelters and standing guard on nearby peaks to ward off the treacherous Indians, and also undoubtedly exercising the soldiers' historic right to gripe about the food, the job, and the country. If they got Sunday off, you can visualize them puttering around their quarters, chinking up the air holes, or climbing the adjacent mountains to look down at the adobe and timber fort; but, more likely, bone-tired and muscle-weary, just sitting on the giant rocks looking at the mountain peaks which have not changed and will not change for thousands of years.

Just to the east was the spring from which they obtained much of their water, and the rectangular corral, with its staves fashioned from cottonwood saplings taken from nearby Limpia Creek — saplings which, to their surprise, were drawing new life from the rich soil and the shallow underground waters adjacent to the spring and which were destined in the years to come to develop into the most magnificent grove of cottonwood trees in all the country.

But the business of the Fort had to go on, and Colonel Mansfield had called for an inspection of all the post. In the Headquarters detachment, Adjutant W. McE. Dye presented to him First Lieutenant T. G. Pitcher and then the non-coms: the Quartermaster Sergeant, the Sergeant Major, the First Quartermaster Sergeant, the two musicians, and the thirteen members of their band. The Adjutant said that this was the Headquarters staff at the moment except for one member sick in the hospital.

Next Colonel Mansfield went to Company A, the records of which show that at this time there was one officer and seventy men at command. On the inspection there appeared two sergeants, two corporals, two musicians, and forty-two privates. He was advised that one sergeant and eight men were on extra duty; four from this company were sick at the hospital and two were in the guardhouse; while the officer, Lieutenant Zeno R. Bliss, with one sergeant, the corporal and two men, were out scouting. The mail coach had been supplied with one escort from this company. The Colonel noted and duly reported that twenty-seven of the men on parade had no Army caps, the knapsacks were not marked, the company was quartered in a crude slab structure called a *jacal* and in tents, and they had not been provided with the standard iron bedsteads of the more civilized posts. Company property and company ordnance were kept in an adjacent tent. Notwithstanding the crudeness of the facilities, Colonel Mansfield reported that the company had good discipline, that the company books were in good order, and that there had been no desertions from this company in 1855 or 1856.

When the Colonel inspected Companies C and D, he was a bit more critical. The men were not in uniform for the inspection and they explained that they had not been fur-

nished with the G.I. pantaloons. He found that two members of these companies had deserted in 1855 and five during the current year — whether because they were unhappy at not having been furnished pantaloons is not of record. They fired rounds with their muskets to show the Colonel their skill, and he complimented them on their good firing, but he was depressed to note that they never had had any bayonet practice. Infantry soldiers recognize this as a usual gripe from brass hats, but how did the Colonel expect the Infantry to pursue the Indians and jab them with bayonets when they had been furnished no dress pantaloons?

The Colonel next repaired to the large tent and adjoining *jacal* that served as the first hospital, and complimented Assistant Sergeant Foard on the good order in which he found those scant accommodations, which were supervised by a steward, two matrons, four attendants, and a cook. He noted that the supplies were ample.

He then walked to the bakery located in another *jacal*, looked approvingly at the oven, munched the fresh-baked bread and pronounced it good.

He stopped to check the post funds, and found on hand \$677 37. Expenditures from October, 1854, until the time of his check, April, 1856, amounted to \$105,520.45, and of this Major Simmons and Major Ruff of the Mounted Rifles were charged with \$43,621.00. Transient teams accounted for \$1,900.00; and under the head of "Losses" was the sum of \$42,099.00. This item called for more talk, and it was explained that some of it had gone to feed impoverished travelers and to supply them and their teams so they could continue on their journeys. There was one bill for corn amounting to \$14,127.75, figured at the rate of \$2.20 a bushel. Some corn was used at the Fort, some was furnished to the improvident, and some was sold at regular rates to the freighters and others traveling the trails. The Colonel learned that fuel wood had to be hauled in from a distance of six or eight miles and cost \$6.50 a cord. Beans were brought in from Mexico and flour from El Paso, but most of the supplies came on the Overland Trail from San Antonio. Fresh beef was butchered locally and cost 11c a pound, while the flour was 12½c.

The Colonel next moved over to the corrals, where he

found nineteen wagons and one cart, 172 mules, 4 horses, 10 Indian ponies, and 1 ass. The quartermaster told him that he had in his employ one civilian as a smith at \$40.00 a month, a guide whom he paid \$30.00 a month and rations, two clerks, two carpenters, two hostlers, three herders, two teamsters, one smith and one saddler. The main supplies he needed were leather and iron, particularly nails — those old square-cut iron nails which one may pick up today around the old Fort buildings.

The Colonel must have stuck conscientiously to his orders to make a "minute inspection," for he mentions that he went to the sutler's store where the sutler sold "ardent spirits" for which he was taxed five cents a man. He forgot to note whether the five cents tax was per drink or per month.

From there he went on to the post garden, located east of the post a short distance from the spring. He noted that it was a very successful garden and a great boon to the post in supplementing the food supply, "there being no market at which to make purchases and the nearest American population being at El Paso and that merely nominal."

As the Inspector General stood there looking at the spring and the garden, Colonel Seawell pointed out the rise of ground nearby where he said he wished to build an entirely new post, all of native stone. Colonel Mansfield slowly shook his head. "I look upon all posts in this Indian country, commanded by whites and so difficult of access, as injudicious, as they enable the enemy to choose his time and pick off the men at will. This is a locality for marauding Indians as they cross the country into Mexico or to intercept wagon trains and travelers. Indians have been known to drive off government animals in broad daylight in spite of the troops. How can your soldiers or mules overhaul these marauding Indians who carry no supplies and can exist on horsemeat, if necessary, while your troops have to stop for rations? You yourself told me that Lieutenant Bliss had pursued one band of savages two hundred miles and finally had to stop at El Paso for food supplies. Your troops, and all the troops in Texas, should be armed with long range rifles so that you could better deal with the Indians, who even come right here into the post to steal your cattle — like those you told me they stole and almost skinned alive by pulling them

through a small pass back there near the end of this canyon."

This business of the location of the permanent buildings of the Fort which were to be built of stone was a slightly sore point with Colonel Seawell. As the first Fort was built in the box canyon, surrounded on three sides by the high rock walls of the mountains, it made a perfect target for the arrows of the Indians, but now they were pretty well tied to that location by the fact that, while many of the buildings were temporary, the erection of permanent quarters had already been commenced. The regimental records shed some light on this conflict of purpose between the Colonel and a subordinate who had been left in command while the Colonel was serving on a court martial elsewhere.

"In 1855, during the absence of Lieutenant Colonel Seawell on detached service, Captain Arthur T. Lee caused to be erected six excellent stone quarters for the companies, and several more temporary quarters for the officers, and thus fixed the site of the post, although Colonel Seawell had desired that it should be located on a plain some two miles distant, as the site already chosen was very objectionable from a military point of view."

The six stone buildings built for company quarters were each 30x60 feet, with flagstone floors and thatched roofs, and were naturally stauncher against the weather and varmints than the slab structures. In the rear of each one of them there was a slab building, 30x56 feet, with thatched roof, used by the companies for kitchens and mess halls. The flagstone floors of these original stone barracks are still visible just behind the present Officers' Row.

The two colonels, being unable to see eye to eye on the future of the Fort, returned to Colonel Seawell's small building, 20x38 feet, with its two small rooms with glazed windows, and Colonel Mansfield sat down to compose his report. He noted that the commanding officer's house, although of frame construction and having a thatched roof, at least had one distinction from its fellows — it was weatherboarded. The other officers were quartered in buildings 20x32 feet, built of pine slabs set into the ground, with board floors, glazed windows and grass roofs. There were four others still smaller

but similarly constructed, and behind these there were twelve small buildings used for officers' kitchens.

The Colonel took time out to remark that the population of Texas was 200,000, composed of planters, farmers, and stock raisers, who produced little but sugar, cotton, corn, wheat and beans. Thinking back on the vast plains that he had crossed, he said that the country appeared better suited to stock raising than anything else. And so he closed his report; but he earned the gratitude of this writer by submitting with his report a neat and careful map of the Fort of 1856.

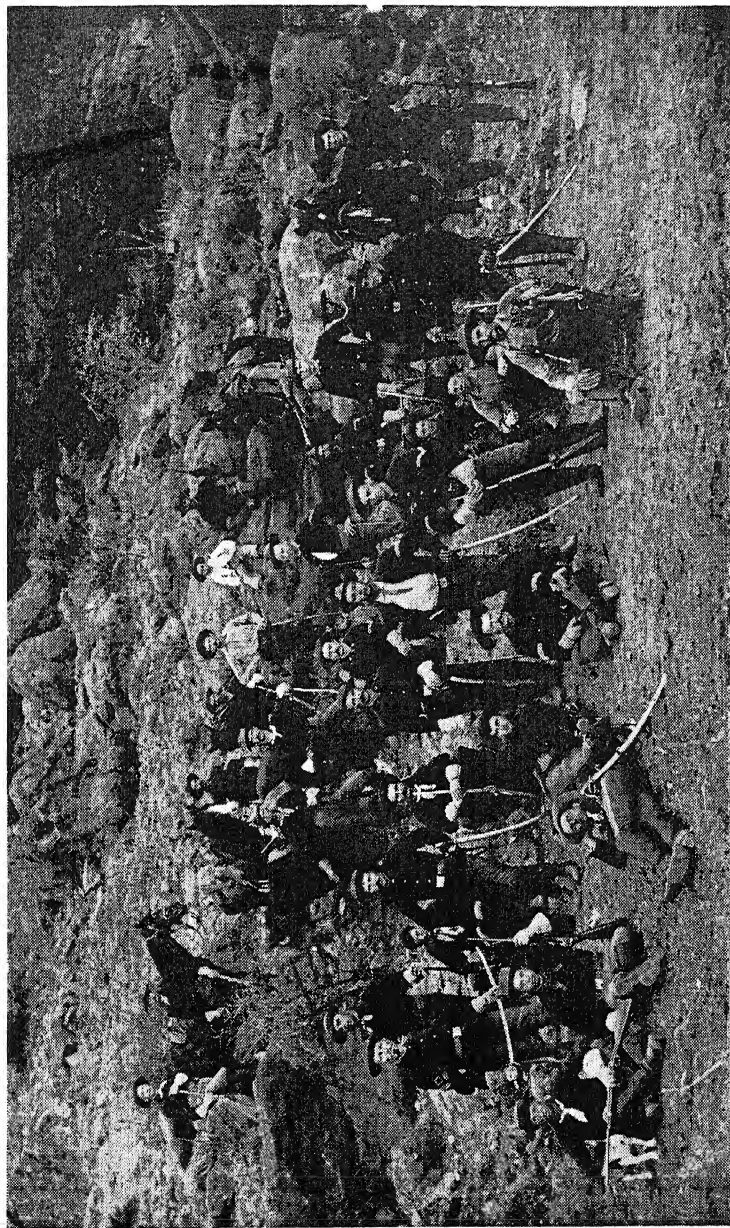
That Colonel Seawell still had his heart on a new stone Fort is apparent from the fact that the next year, on September 19, 1857, he had his regimental quartermaster, Lieutenant Thomas M. Jones, report to headquarters in great detail on the size, construction and condition of the Fort buildings, and he enclosed estimates for the new buildings which were desired. He closed with this thought:

"The plans and estimates I herewith enclose, but would remark that the expense of only the extra duty men employed in the building work and the cost of the time enters into the estimate. The cost of the timber will be an item which cannot be determined, since the quantity required is difficult to calculate, as a great deal of that now in the temporary buildings can be used in the new ones."

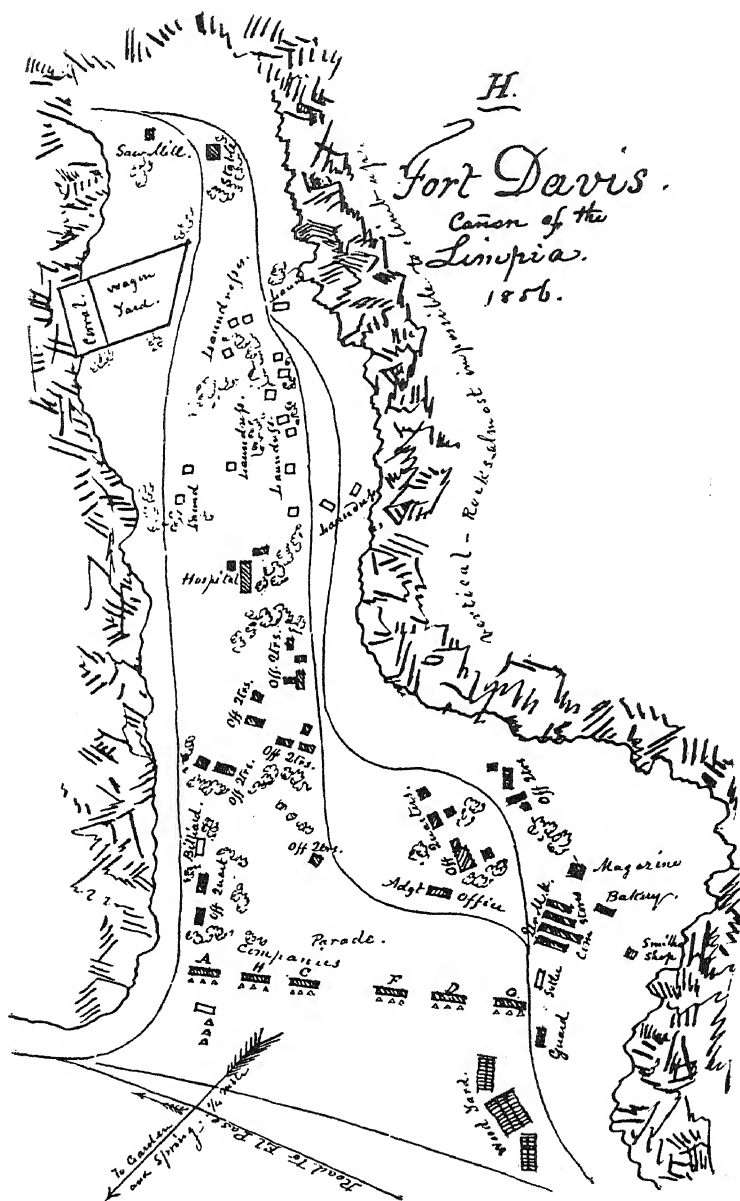
Colonel Seawell never got his new stone Fort. It was to be built, but not in his time. What was there served until it was largely destroyed during the Civil War. But before that time Colonel Seawell was promoted to Colonel of the Sixth Infantry and was transferred to his new station on October 17, 1860.

If people take comfort out of the troubles of others, then we moderns at Fort Davis should be comforted and a bit red in the face at our easy life, in reading another report by Lieutenant Jones, made also in 1857, for from it we gain a hint of the daily rounds, the bothers, the sweat and toil, and the ups and downs of life on the brave and remote frontier.

"Adjoining the commanding officer's house is a log house built in 1854 and not fit to use." So the soldiers did do some building in October, November and December of that first



TROOP B, THIRD CAVALRY



COLONEL MANSFIELD'S MAP, 1856

year. Lieutenant Jones continues, and one can feel his discontent and anxiety.

"The Hospital is 85x20 feet, built of pickets, thatched with grass, altogether slightly constructed and at present in a very rickety condition, neither safe nor a sufficient building for the purposes of a hospital.

"Storehouses are temporary structures, one 100 ft. long and 25 feet wide, built of slabs, is roofed with paulin." Doubtless that was the word used for tarpaulin, or, as we say in this more enlightened and slangy age, tarp. "It is used as a commissary but the canvas covers are almost worn out and the walls are of too slight material to bear a thatch roof . . . Thirteen small buildings 18x16 feet, slabs, thatched, used for quarters of the married soldiers and their families. Bake house, built of stone, 42x15.

"All the buildings above enumerated have been erected by the troops . . . who . . . do not have their full allowance of quarters, as the ones now occupied would normally accommodate 169 men, whereas the command of six companies, staff and band, number 372 men."

Three hundred seventy-two men to hold a nation's edge in a hostile and savage land! The cost of a hundred thousand dollars plus for two years of the holding was a reasonably low price to pay for so huge a chunk of our country, no?

"There is abundance of good building stone within a mile of the post, easily procured by blasting," Mr. Jones continues, "but the cost is unknown as the land on which the stone is quarried is unclaimed. Pine lumber of a good quality is obtained from pineries about 70 or 75 miles distant." Where did he mean? Another report by someone else at another time says 25 miles. "A large quantity has already been used in constructing the fort buildings. A good deal of labor is required in obtaining it, the trees having been cut out of the lower part of the valley, those growing on the sides of the mountain have to be cut and dragged a considerable distance to be loaded on the wagons.

"The road a considerable distance to the pinery is very rough, acting severely against the means of transportation. When brought to the post the timber is sawed by one of Page's Circular Saw Mills; twenty-four mules are required

to work the mill, two shifts of twelve each working on alternate days.

"The cost of the timber obtained from the pineries is not yet known. The person who owns the land, or is supposed to own it, is about to put in a claim against the Government, and as I do not know what will probably be allowed him, I am unable to state the ultimate cost."

The Lieutenant might well be concerned about the damage claims for cut timber, because there was at this very time a little side row going on with John James concerning the value of the timber cut from the sides of the mountain adjoining the post, the lumber of which went into the construction of the first temporary buildings. In October, 1860, just before he was transferred, Colonel Seawell was trying to clear up this and other outstanding items and wrote the Quartermaster General in Washington asking that the Government pay the James claim of one thousand dollars, which had matured into a suit brought against Captain Arthur T. Lee, Lieutenant T. G. Pitcher, and Lieutenant Thomas M. Jones.

Lieutenant Jones' report continued: "The roughness of the road and the consequent damage to wagons and injury to mules has also been an item of expense and quite an important one, as most, if not all, of our supply of wagons, previous to those furnished on our last requisition, were used up and broken hauling timber over bad roads. The loss of mules in the same service has been great, and although the greatest care has been taken, there are at present a great many in very poor condition."

The Lieutenant says nothing about the severe loss of men. Which observation comes from the fact that a story is told of an old sawmill road in the mountains which had an elbow turn that was called Suicide Curve. That may be how Elbow Canyon got its name. It is said to have cost the lives of several drivers. But regimental quartermasters, from the nature of their duties, were concerned only with property losses. The hospital and duty rosters reported man-losses.

"An abundance of good water," the Lieutenant's report continues, "is secured from the Limpia, a small stream distant about fourteen hundred yards from the post. Two

wagons are constantly employed hauling water to supply the garrison."

CHAPTER 5

THE ARMY EATS, FIGHTS, AND WRITES REPORTS

RANCID BACON and other spoiled supplies were only one source of annoyance to the soldiers at Fort Davis. Early in 1855 the post commissary sergeant was instructed to purchase flour, beans and vinegar in the region, if possible, "owing to the cost of transportation and the loss of supplies owing to long hauls and climatic conditions." The cost of freighting from Corpus Christi was 12½¢ a pound. The sergeant responded that he had contracted with "Mr. Hart in El Paso" for flour, and added that drafts on New York and New Orleans were negotiated at par but that drafts on San Antonio and New Orleans were preferred.

In April, 1856, there is more correspondence about the high price of cord wood. "It is necessary for the wood to be hauled six or eight miles and for the wood cutters to be brought from a distance and their supplies from San Antonio. There is constant danger from the Indians, who are on the watch for such parties. One wood hauler has lost 19 mules. Further, as the Government owns no land here the danger of suits from cutting timber by troops is offset by the saving effected thereby."

In September, 1856, flour from El Paso was costing \$21.55 a barrel. A brass hat in the East pointed out that it could be bought in Baltimore for \$2.95 less. "Yeh," said somebody in the West, "but look at the transportation cost from Baltimore and the spoilage involved."

And they needed hay. "I would respectfully recommend,"

Lieutenant Jones wrote, "the best and cheapest mode of procuring hay for animals at this Post, the following: Some arrangements made for the lease of the piece of land within about two miles of the Post owned by Mr. Magoffin (of El Paso) to which at one time I think a movement of the Post was contemplated, and a lease with some understanding of this movement was made for a dollar a year. This land containing between 140 and 200 acres is now enclosed, and with little labor the fence can be made good and with a little more labor of a few men and ploughs, enough cane seed, clover or corn can be sowed to furnish Post animals with hay for a year."

In December, 1856, Fort Davis was howling clear to Washington, D. C., for repair parts for the sawmill, saying that all they were able to get in San Antonio was "saw files and 5 lbs. beeswax."

In August, 1856, a board of officers convened in Fort Davis to investigate the circumstances of an Indian attack on the mail escort which had occurred July 24. Soldiers and civilians gave testimony. A sergeant from Fort Davis had evidently been in command, but the party was joined at Fort Lancaster by another sergeant and seven men.

About an hour before sundown on the day they left Lancaster they sighted a band of Indians on the west side of the Pecos River. The sergeant in command halted and had the mail wagon and the ambulance arranged for a barricade. An Indian came across waving a white flag, and upon being ordered by the sergeant to clear out, the redskin dropped his arm three times; whereupon the Indians across the narrow stream opened fire. The soldiers returned it.

The sergeant then advanced alone in front of the barricade the better to learn the position of the Indians and was struck by a bullet. He was taken inside the barricade, and the fight continued. The sergeant from Fort Lancaster took over command, and, seeing that the Indians numbered close to one hundred and that they were about to charge, he ordered the party to withdraw, every man for himself.

This was the nub of the complaint by the civilians of the party, who held that the soldiers should have stood. But the soldiers were only obeying custom and standing orders to retreat in the face of overwhelming numbers.

The soldiers withdrew, carrying the wounded sergeant. The fight continued, the Indians pressing after them. But only for a short time. The soldiers gained a nearby mesa and, finding that the sergeant was dead, they left him there and kept on back to Fort Lancaster, where they arrived at three in the morning.

The Indians, soon losing interest in the soldiers, returned and looted the mail wagon with its supplies. So preoccupied were they with this that the civilians made a sneak of it and got away safely. The Indians, finished with their quarreling over the loot, went up to the mesa to see if they could find the soldiers. They found only the dead sergeant, and took his scalp. The result of the case was not recorded in the report of the hearing.

Of another affair Captain T. G. Pitcher at Fort Davis wrote: "Sir: I have the honor to report that the Government expedition which left this Post on the 25th ult. for San Antonio, by which I forwarded my property returns for the 1st Qt., '57, was attacked by Indians, four out of seven men killed, and the mail entirely destroyed. Another copy of my letters is being made and as soon as completed will be forwarded promptly."

An account of a public auction at Fort Davis of condemned property shows a horse going for \$6, an Indian pony for \$35, and mules from \$3.50 to \$18. These were doubtless not typical animals, or else the price of the stock was low at a time when their feed was high. This was in the fall of 1857 and Lieutenant Jones, the quartermaster, was still recording his costs. He says:

"Corn of good quality is at present purchased by contract at a cost of \$5.48 per *fanega* of 154 lbs. each. It is almost wholly procured from the State of Chihuahua, Mex. Only a small quantity of corn is raised by the few settlers on this side of the Rio Grande in the vicinity of Presidio del Norte. The supply may be seriously affected at any time. The Governor of Chihuahua may at any time prohibit its exportation, as he has heretofore done whenever symptoms of a scarcity appear. Three hundred and fifty *fanegas* is the average quantity required per month for consumption at the Post, and for the supply to transient public animals.

"Hay can be found only in small quantities and at a con-

siderable distance from the post. A quantity sufficient to supply the Post animals for about three months was cut last Fall by the troops. If purchased by contract the price would be very high, probably not less than \$46 to \$50 per ton, quality indifferent."

As the meticulous Lieutenant wanted to be sure his superiors in the Quartermaster Corps understood fully the difficulties under which he was working and the reason for the high prices of supplies, he reported in some detail on the then condition of the road:

"As to communications, the means from this post to the upper and lower country is by the road known as the El Paso road." He gives distances between waterholes and stopping places all the way from Fort Clark, and concludes: "From Barilla Springs to the entrance to Wild Rose Pass 7 miles, thence to the Painted Camp near Fort Davis 18½ miles. Total distance from Fort Clark to Fort Davis 335 miles. The road is generally good for the whole distance, and practicable for loaded wagons at all seasons. All the streams on the road have to be crossed by fording, none being bridged.

"The road from Fort Davis to Fort Bliss is an excellent one in the dry season of the year, only eight or nine miles on the Rio Grande being difficult on account of the deep sand.

"About 11 miles from this post is the first water we reach, but it cannot be considered permanent or sufficient for a large number of animals."

This is what today is known as the old water seep two miles or so beyond the J. W. Merrill ranch home, lying on the east side of Point of Rocks and to the right of the road. It is indicated now by a little more greenness of the grass than adjacent growth shows. But long ago it was quite a stopping place. Because it concerned the soldiers at the post, let us continue for just a little more about the waterholes and roads.

"From the 'water seep' a spring 7 or 8 miles beyond it is called Barrel Spring, which is generally made on the first day's journey from the Post. Dead Man's Hole, 12 miles beyond, is the next watering place. The water is scarcely ever deficient at either of these springs. From Dead Man's to Van Horn Wells is about 36 miles, a good road but uneven.

(A good road must have been anything that mules could pull wagons over.) From Van Horn Wells to the Rio Grande 58 miles, thence to Fort Bliss 90 miles which is generally made in light wagons in 3 days but heavy wagons make about 4 days of it."

And today the trip from Fort Davis to El Paso can be made in four hours!

WATERHOLES BETWEEN SAN ANTONIO AND EL PASO, THEIR NAMES
IN 1857, AND THEIR DISTANCES APART.

FROM	TO	DISTANCE
San Antonio	Leon	6.53
Leon	Castroville	18
Castroville	Quihi	10
Quihi	Rio Seco, (Dhanis)	15.28
Rio Seco (Dhanis)	Rancheros Creek	8.38
Rancheros Creek	Sabinal	3.94
Sabinal	Comanche Creek	5
Comanche Creek	Rio Frio	8.46
Rio Frio	Head of Leona	6.08
Head of Leona	Nueces	9.04
Nueces	Turkey Creek	10.27
Turkey Creek	Elm Creek	15.23
Elm Creek	Las Moras (Fort Clark)	7.13
Las Moras (Fort Clark)	Piedra Pinta	7
Piedra Pinta	Zoquete Creek	8.86
Zoquete Creek	Arroyo Pedro	3.81
Arroyo Pedro	San Felipe	8.80
San Felipe	1st crossing of San Pedro	10.22
1st crossing of San Pedro	Painted Caves	2.54
Painted Caves	Palos Blancos	15.73
Palos Blancos	2nd crossing of San Pedro	18.39
2nd crossing of San Pedro	First camp on San Pedro	19.50
First camp on San Pedro	Howard's Springs	44
Howard's Springs	Live Oak Creek	30.44
Live Oak Creek	Ferry of Pecos	7.29
Ferry of Pecos	First camp on Pecos	38.26
First camp on Pecos	Arroyo Escondido	16.26
Arroyo Escondido	Ojos Escondidos	8.58
Ojos Escondidos	Comanche Springs	19.40
Comanche Springs	Ojo de Leon	8.88
Ojo de Leon	Barilla Springs	33.86

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Barilla Springs	Fort Davis	28
Fort Davis	Barrel Spring	18.42
Barrel Spring	Dead Man's Hole	13.58
Dead Man's Hole	Van Horn's Wells	32.83
Van Horn's Wells	Eagle Springs	19.74
Eagle Springs	Last camp on Rio Grande	31.42
Last camp on Rio Grande	San Elceario	59.80
San Elceario	Socorro	5.45
Socorro	Isleta	3.10
Isleta	Fort Bliss	12.14
Fort Bliss	Franklin (opposite El Paso)	2

CHAPTER 6

ANTE-BELLUM PEOPLE, CAMELS AND EVENTS

*I*_N 1859 FORT DAVIS had visitors who received more publicity than any others before or since, for books have been written about them — the camels.

Jefferson Davis as Secretary of War brought forth an idea that camels might be efficient beasts of burden in the deserts of the Southwest. In 1855 he persuaded Congress to appropriate \$30,000 for the experiment. The next year two shiploads of camels from Africa and Asia, including both the bactrian, the beast of burden, and the dromedary, the animal of speed for human passengers, were unloaded on the Texas coast at Indianola. In 1857 a trial journey to California was made with a contingent of the animals.

Looking after the more intimate camel life of the party was a picturesque character from the Mediterranean Basin who, even in the United States, wore a red fez and other bright and strange garments. His name was Hadji Ali, but he has gone down in American camel history mostly as Hi-Jolly. Uncle Billy (W. L.) Kingston of Jeff Davis County has told this writer that as a boy he saw Hi-Jolly soon after the Civil War, down in the San Antonio country. The Kingston mules and oxen met the Hi-Jolly camels unexpectedly, with results so explosive that Mr. Kingston could chuckle about them even in 1946 in his eighty-seventh year. The civilized animals of the Kingston train practically demolished all their wagons and carts getting away from there. Mr. Kingston well remembered the red fez on Hi-Jolly's black head and his rainbow duds, but he didn't recall whether the

camels were two-humped bactrians or the one-humped dromedaries.

Chris Emmett of San Antonio wrote a book, *Texas Camel Tales*, and we are indebted to him for an incident on the California trip. We quote:

"After leaving San Antonio, the officer second in command at Fort Davis, Captain Arthur Tracy Lee, accompanied by his wife and child, joined the ranks of the camel brigade. Upon arrival at Fort Lancaster, this fifteen month old son died, despite all efforts to relieve him. The officers of the expedition tarried at the grave of the child in sympathy for the mother, who had around her in this hour of distress only three women, all until that fateful day unknown to her."

One can to this day feel deeply for that mother with her empty arms, far from any home out in the lonely desert land.

In 1859 another try-out for the camels in the western country was ordered and the party left San Antonio, or vicinity, in May under command of Captain William Echols. * Lieutenant Edward L. Harte of the Eighth Infantry was placed in direct charge of twenty-four camels, each of which carried 350 pound loads Emmett says that the camels, when they first arrived in this country, were tested several times for the maximum loads they could carry and that they were often in excess of 600 pounds.

On the 23rd of June the party arrived within sight of the eastern slope of the Limpia "mountains." A camel was bitten by a rattlesnake, with no bad results. Next day they arrived on La Limpia, the camels having traveled four days less three hours without drinking, "and showing no unusual distress."

Three days were spent in Fort Davis, with scores of soldiers and a few civilians viewing the camels. On June 30 they started out again, this time into the Big Bend, which trip was to be the real test of camel transportation.

Incidentally, one may wonder when the Big Bend came to be called that. Although this writer has made considerable inquiry, no record has been found of that area's being referred to by that name before this writer himself used it in the San Antonio *Express* in 1916, when General Pershing was in Mexico with United States troops. We looked at a

* Captain Echols made a second expedition with the camels in 1860, arriving at Fort Davis between July 5 and 12 of that year.

map, saw the "Big Bend" of the Rio Grande, and used that expression in print. We subsequently learned that the name had been in use since about 1870

On leaving Fort Davis for the Big Bend trip the camels carried 600-pound loads. They followed the old Comanche Trail part of the way to the Rio Grande, then, turning back from the river, they traveled toward what is now Marathon. Emmett sets forth that now they "encountered an obstacle" that proved difficult for the desert animals — the maguey, known as the century plant. Equipped with long sharp thorns it damaged the camels' legs and feet, "but the camels learned to place their feet against the sides of the blades and crush them over." Raht says that the real deterrent to the use of camels was the small, sharp, igneous rocks of this region, which injured the soft-padded feet of the animals.

When the Civil War came on, the camel project broke up but animals were scattered throughout the Southwest for many years afterward. Emmett says that nine of those stranded by fate in California were seen on moonlight nights as late as 1890 or 1891.

Up to this point we have told in general terms of the Fort and events in its history, but it may give us a better feel of the period to quote from the manuscript of one of the travelers of this time. John C. Reid of Selma, Alabama, made a trip from his home to San Diego, California, in 1856, and made notes of his impressions of people and places along the route. With his party he left Comanche Springs October 26, 1856, and after two days' travel across the limestone plateau they came to the foot of the mountains in Limpia Creek.

"This is a rapid little stream, reached by the road at the mouth of a *cañon*, bearing the same name, through which both it and the road run, a distance of twenty miles. The stream is crossed by the road an average of one time in each mile. The road diverges from the stream, only, to run through Wild Rose Pass, a romantic looking section, embracing great hills, the steepest indeed traversed by the road between the Gulf and the Pacific, and narrow valleys, where flourish, innumerable flowers; hence the name.

"At the further end of the *cañon* the road leads to the

table land, and four miles further on you behold Fort Davis.

"Arriving at this Fort in the forenoon we struck camp, and remained till the evening of the following day.

"Fort Davis is well situated in a recess of the mountain; is walled in on three sides by perpendicular rocks of great height. The principal houses are built of a cream-colored limestone, quarried nearby. Kitchen vegetables generally are raised here, in abundance, by irrigation. Corn was brought from Chihuahua, and furnished to this post under contract at \$8 a *fanega* (a Mexican measure: about three bushels). Merchandise was held at enormous prices by the Sutler, who alone supplied the community

"The soldier stationed at a frontier post who gets \$12 per month for his services with 'grub' included, however economical he may be, however rigid his officers may be in restricting his expenditure for grog, to two drinks a day, after paying for his clothes, at the end of his 'enlistment,' he finds it difficult to make buckle and tongue meet.

"Here Mr. Radford mounted himself by the purchase of Thom, a pony.

"The night following our departure from Fort Davis, we were at the mercy of a pitiless Norther accompanied by rain.

"In descending from the table land we passed through divers belts of cedar and live oak, but over no stream. The holes of water were conveniently situated for more than the week following of night camping. The grasses were passably abundant; among which we discovered the far famed grama. The soil was in many places fertile. The appearance of the country was more diversified by reason of certain devious valleys, hills of granite, and beautiful marble, over which the road ran. We observed beautiful specimens of marble and granite, about midway between the above fort and the Rio Grande, cropping out beneath our feet.

"In this stretch we marched through the principal thoroughfare of the immense prairie-dog town (before noticed) sans cerimonie. Indeed so cavalierly did we carry ourselves towards them that, whether official or cit.' each had to retire to his 'hole.' or receive a hostile salutation. Here, like the minutes of the day, we beheld coyotes (prairie wolf),

deer, and antelope. The last named were often in herds of such size, that, when reposing, we mistook them for cattle. Then it was that, supposing them to belong to Indians, each man looked well to the condition of his iron.

"Improperly consulting our traveling directions we diverged to the left, and thereby missed paying our respects to Dead Man's Hole, a water tank of notoriety, and named from the remains of a man who had been shot, having been found in it. It is described as situated in the mountains, being of great depth, containing an inexhaustible supply of pure water, hid from the light of day, and which is obtained only by great labor. This is numbered as one of the places whereat the savage preys on the unwary emigrant.

"We nooned at the next point of interest, Van Horn's well, a hole in the ground funnel-like, a few feet wide and deep, filled with water. This is situated at the further edge of a valley which contains a heavy coating of rich black alluvial soil, and at the base of a mountain whose summit is reached by a well worn path, wherein we saw abundant moccasin sign. This path is supposed to lead directly across the mountain to Eagle Spring, by which the distance is lessened one half over the route usually traveled. Also that the Indians, from this summit, signal the approach of the pale face, and should it be agreed on to attack him, they retire, make their arrangements, and await his arrival at the spring. Such are the suppositions of men who have traveled, and fought Indians.

"Eagle Spring, and next water, being distant twenty miles, we deemed it advisable to fill a ten gallon keg before leaving the well. With this we 'watered the animals' the following morning, 6th November, retaining a draught for ourselves. Near noon Mr. Radford rode in advance of the wagon, and soon returned with the intelligence, 'Eagle Spring just ahead, and road clear.' We were then at the farther side of a vast sterile valley, and near the base of one of several mountain peaks of great height. The latter were in a line, and formed the southern boundary of the valley. The road, after making towards the spring, ran west parallel to the edge of the valley, and but a few hundred yards from the peaks. The general direction of the road was east and west. Through what appeared to be a pass in the mountain,

one hundred and fifty yards wide, the road ran southerly two hundred yards, upon a plateau, where obstructed by a ridge thirty or forty feet high, it ended. This ridge extended from the right hand peak to a dry ravine or depression of twenty or more feet, at the base of a left hand peak. Within eighty yards of this, vehicles were stopped and the animals driven thence by a trail up the ravine to the spring. Immediately to the rear and parallel with the ridge, noticed, were several smaller ridges which terminated like the first named at the ravine. A company of Dragoons, the preceding summer while stationed here, built as a fortification a dirt wall, waist high, fifteen or twenty feet long, and ten feet wide, on the first named ridge; this overlooked the plateau, i. e., camping ground. We halted within eighty yards of this wall. When, stripping the nine animals, they were placed in charge of Messrs. Nave and Livingston, and driven directly towards the spring: leaving the remainder of us variously employed, collecting fuel, making fire, and the general preparations for dinner.

"These two were absent but a few minutes before reappearing, when they hurriedly reported, 'Indians down yonder, for I saw 'em.' Hastily snatching our arms, we ran helter skelter in the direction whence the mules had been driven fifty yards, from which point, at a distance of eighty or ninety yards ahead, we saw our 'stock' urged off by a body of nearly naked redskins, whose number was augmented to about twenty-five by others, who then emerged from the several hollows formed by the rear ridges, where armed they had been posted to cut down any who might accompany the animals. The sight was enlivening. The Indians were large and well formed, and bore themselves with ferocious dignity. Their din, calculated to affright the weak, was a nasal, guttural, squall, whoop, and altogether unearthly noise. But we numbered among our stock several who had often heard it thunder, who did not heed this clamor, and who controlled their less experienced companions against a stampede; so that their greatest speed was a trot. Favored in this respect, we had the advantage of the enemy, and made it profitable. As they followed at the heels of the mules we moved near unto and poured shot after shot upon them, till, unable longer to stand the squeeze, they madly pushed forward. Thus our

little party of six men were left in possession of all the animals, excepting Mr. Radford's pony and the crippled mule, both of which had been mounted and ridden out of sight.

"At this juncture the Indians were hid from view. We now turned the animals towards camp. On reaching the plateau they moved along the base of the front ridge, and commenced grazing between the fort and camp. We returned to the wagon to prepare for further belligerent operations. Simultaneous with our return fell, among us, a shower of steel-headed arrows, both from the fort and the ravine. The fort was filled with warriors; while the ravine contained six or eight. All were armed with bows, save two who carried rifles, and determined to punish us for our temerity in resisting their claim to our property. It was then clear and mid-day.

"From the evidence furnished, I thought my companions were of good metal, and entered into this fight to the death if need be. Though without tree or brush, or other protection, we thought, with our advantages, we could 'whip the fight.' The unceasing war cry, succeeded by showers of missiles, was promptly answered by volley after volley, from our little squad. Their '*Bueno*' (Good, which the Indian sent with his well aimed ball or arrow), met a response in the shower of 'buck and ball,' hurled with the message, 'take that, you scoundreds.' After the first few rounds, no Indian exhibited any part of his person more than an instant to despatch his arrow; hence their fires, though rapid, were without precision. This resulted from well directed shots from our ranks, and a constant readiness to pick off any who showed more than the top of his head above the wall. The condition of those in the ravine was different. Although below us they were protected by the sinuosities of one of the banks, so that they stood erect and deliberately discharged their weapons. These contributed much to animate our ranks, for, soon after the renewal of operations, each of us had been favored with more than one arrow, and brushed uncomfortably near by the whizzing of rifle balls from the ravine. Many of our shots were turned in that direction; these spiked some of their guns.

"Thus the fight continued till long after the sun had

passed from view, and thrown the mountain shade over both parties. By this hour we had witnessed the 'death leap' of three, and the wounded stagger of other 'braves'; whilst each of our men, by the blessing of God, had been a fraction removed from harm's way. The faithful dog, Hector, was less fortunate. He had been shot through the body and fled from us, his supposed enemies, to fall among his murderers. We saw that we could not much longer calculate on this safety, for in our exposed condition, as night's curtain enveloped us, if we stood by our property, we might feelingly repeat,

'The day is past and gone,
 The evening shades appear;
 O may we all remember well,
 The night of death draws near!'

"Meantime our foes were rendered trebly furious by their discomfiture; had posted several of their number upon our rear towards the mouth of the pass, as if to cut off our retreat. 'I am shot Colonel!' exclaimed Mr. Nave, exhibiting his right arm, wherein was firmly imbedded the head of an arrow.

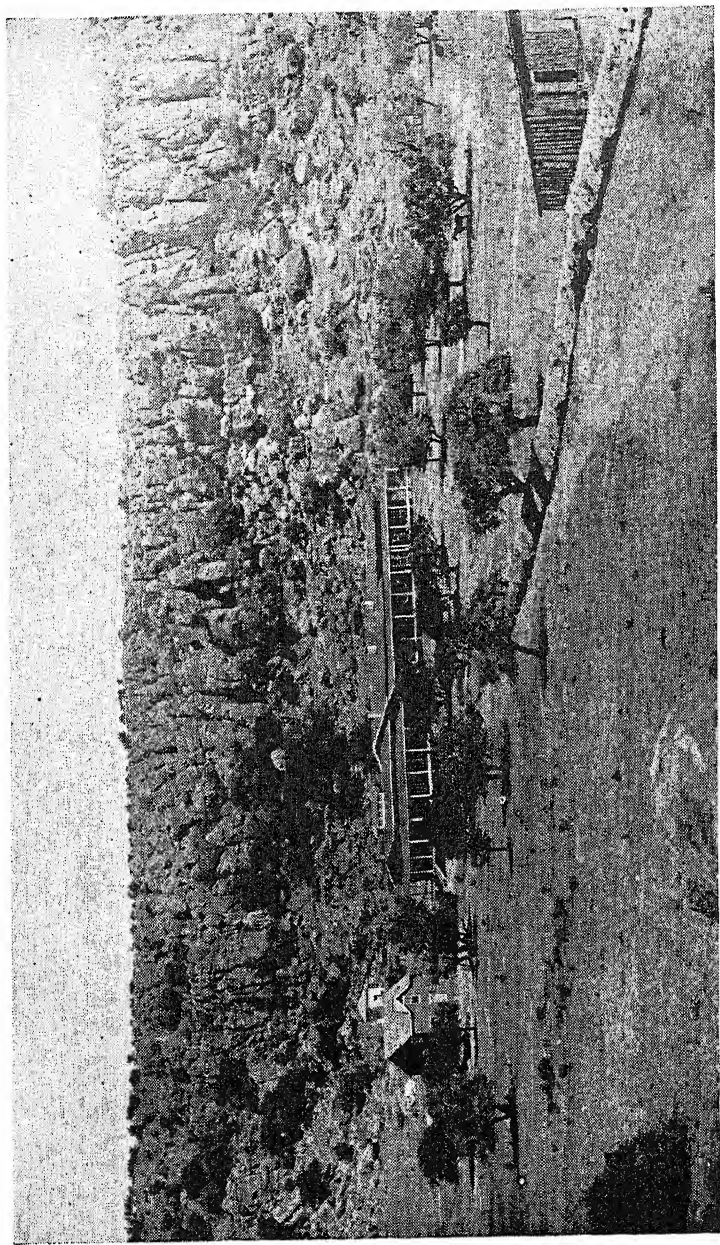
"At this period I took occasion to offer to my companions, substantially, the following as the conclusion of my solemn reflections based on the importance of removing our property: That to remove the wagon a release of the animals was essential; that to rescue the animals would be attended with imminent peril, because whomever attempted to drive them would be exposed to the fire of the Indians in the fort, unless they (Indians) were first expelled therefrom; that this, though apparently hazardous, was most feasible, inasmuch as some of us could reach the fort, and then accomplish our wishes; that notwithstanding my confidence, in the ultimate success of the move, I would ask no one to follow, but, &c. At the conclusion of these suggestions, offered as we fought, I enquired of each man, beginning with the nearest, 'will you follow in a charge on that fortification?' An affirmative response, succeeded by an interval for the necessary preparations — with a manoeuvre combining make ready, and present arms, and a do or die yell, we began the charge. We

scaled the ridge without lessening our speed, a fast run. At the brow our expectation was to meet the enemy in their strong stand, then a hand to hand fight in the fort. In these calculations we were disappointed. The enemy without show of resistance fled, and were out of sight, ere we reached the summit of the ridge.

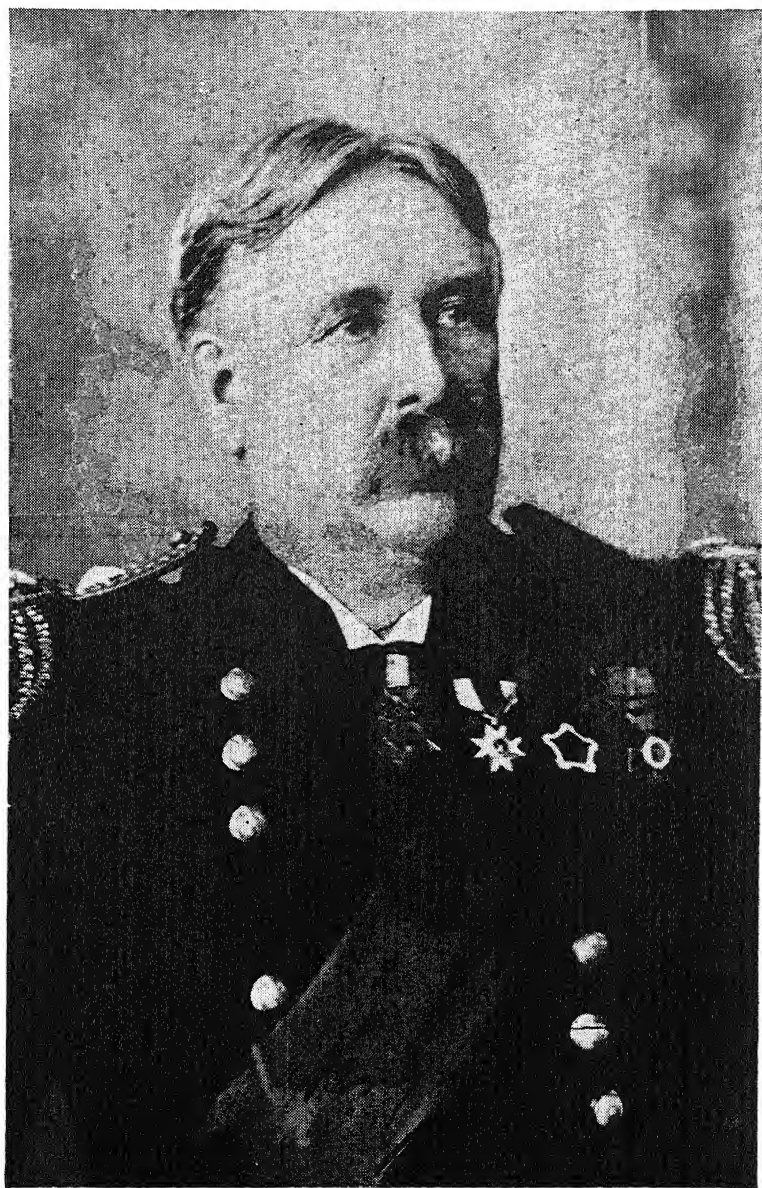
"Remaining in the fort a few minutes we descended, and drove our animals to the wagon. Scarcely had we returned when the savages again occupied the fort, and reopened a fire indiscriminately upon ourselves and stock. At this time Mr. Radford placing his right hand to the side of his head, wherefrom trickled a small stream of blood, cried out, 'they have killed me!' Mr. R. supposed that his wound had been inflicted by a ball, instead of which it was by a glancing arrow, and merely through the skin. Just then Mr. Nave exclaimed, 'they have shot me again.' And as he comically twisted himself to get a view of his left shoulder, wherefrom protruded an arrow, the tinge of merriment, produced by Mr. Radford's wound, swelled into a burst of laughter at Mr. N—'s expense.

"By this time we were 'harnessed and hitched,' and each of the animals carried one or more wounds. And notwithstanding the exertions used by part in protecting those engaged about the team, the Indians were but too successful in directing their missiles. The life of Mr. Donovan was saved by a ball lodging in the saddle mule which stood in a direct line with him. At the moment the words, 'all ready,' were given, your humble servant felt something impinge upon his left thigh, and looking down saw that he too was shot. Withdrawing the arrow, it was thrown among the hundred others strewn around. Through inadvertence one of the mules, not used in the wagon, had been allowed to return to the base of the ridge. In order to obtain him it again became necessary to vacate the fort; a holla and start, of a few of us had the desired effect. Driving him to the remainder, the word 'onward' put all in motion.

"When two hundred yards removed, several of the enemy occupied our former position (camp), and began to re-collect their arrows; a single round evacuated the premises. A few hundred yards further the saddle mule fell (from the



HOSPITAL AT FORT DAVIS ABOUT 1880



MAJOR GENERAL WILLIAM R. SHAFTER IN 1898

wound described,) lifeless. Our halt was delayed until another filled his place.

"In the meantime the Indians were together, and, now reduced to less than twenty, disposed themselves in the following order: a dozen, in single file, moved rapidly along the base of the left hand peak, and parallel to the road; one followed some distance to our rear; the remainder kept beyond shot range on the left. We had now reached a point in the road from which we beheld the sun setting, also the country for miles ahead. As this last opened upon our gaze, we were all ready to give undue credence to the cry of one of the party, 'oo-pe! look yonder at the Injins.' This was occasioned by a vast number of Spanish bayonets (cacti), strung out a half mile ahead, like men formed 'in line.'

"The face of the country was broken by aroyas (dry creek beds), which were difficult to cross. At the further edge of the fourth one, and a mile distant from our first engagement, the twelve Indians before noticed, mounted on horses and mules, were busily engaged in throwing up rock defenses on either side of the road. We drove steadily on till in full view of these operations. They were more than three feet high. Regularly ranged behind them, knelt our enemies, who, as we approached, contorted their bodies, threw back their heads, and rapidly twirled a shining circular, something, &c., which we concluded were designed to enchant, or conjure us. We however did not feel the influence of the spell, and moved steadily on to within one hundred yards of them. Then they chose to dispense with these instruments of cunning, and resort to those of war; and accordingly opened a brisk fire. Their protected position prevented a return from us until within seventy-five yards of them, when the wagon was stopped, and we charged their defences. At this the enemy again fled, and received our fire at full speed. Our engagements had been with Apaches.

"Again we moved on till we reached a good camping place. And by our faithful arms, expecting an attack, we spent the night."

CHAPTER 7

THE EIGHTH INFANTRY

SINCE IT WAS the Eighth Infantry that constructed the first buildings at Fort Davis, it would be a kind of ingratitude not to tell a bit or two about the regiment and some of its people.

Lieutenant P. M. Sleet, the regimental historian of the Eighth Infantry, has furnished information about the organization and history of that regiment.

The Eighth Infantry is one of the oldest and most distinguished in the United States Army. It was organized in New York State July 7, 1838, as a force to maintain neutrality of the United States along the Canadian frontier, and served a year and a half on this duty. It was then sent against the Winnebago Indians in the Territory of Wisconsin, and from there to Florida to campaign against the Seminoles.

After extended service against the Seminoles the regiment was sent to Texas under General Zachariah Taylor. In the Mexican War it took part in the battles of Palo Alto, Resaca de la Palma, Monterey, Vera Cruz, Cerro Gerdo, Churubusco, Molino del Rey, and Chapultepec.

After the Mexican War the regiment fought Indians in New Mexico and Texas. Upon Secession of the Southern States it was mostly captured by the Confederates. Its colors, however, were safely carried through all lines and delivered personally to President Lincoln by Sergeant Major Joseph K. Wilson and Corporal John C. Hesse, Company A.

A reorganized Eighth Infantry (the colors were the heart of the regiment and were the basis of the reorganization)

took part in eleven important battles of the Civil War. After the war, until 1890, it took part in nine campaigns against Indians in the Far West. In 1898 it went to Cuba and fought at El Caney, San Juan, and was in the siege of Santiago. From Cuba it went to the Philippines, fighting at one time on Leyte Island, and serving on other tours of duty in the Islands, on Jolo, Mindanao and Luzon.

The regiment fought in France in World War I, and served on occupational duty in Germany at the close of that war. It fought through World War II after a period of strenuous training at Fort Benning.

With this brief historical reference to the Eighth Infantry, let us return to the story of Fort Davis and its first commandant.

Washington Seawell originally entered the military service by appointment to West Point from Virginia in 1821. On July 1, 1825, he was made a Brevet Lieutenant of the Seventh Infantry. He joined the Eighth Infantry and assumed command on July 20, 1853, having been promoted through the various grades to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. After serving as a member of the general courts martial, he rejoined his regiment on June 8, 1854. His service at Fort Davis is described in detail elsewhere in this book. From August 30, 1856, to March 30, 1857, he was on detached service from the regiment as a member of the general courts martial at Ringgold Barracks. He then returned to Fort Davis and served there until the latter part of 1859 when he was on detached service at San Antonio, returning to Fort Davis on May 17, 1860. He stayed there until he was transferred to San Antonio and promoted to Colonel of the Sixth Infantry on October 17, 1860. In 1862 he was retired, with his rank of Colonel. In 1865 he was appointed to the rank of Brigadier General Retired for "long and faithful services." He died January 8, 1888, at San Francisco, California.

But we must elaborate the casual historical statement that the Eighth Infantry fought Indians in Texas and New Mexico after the Mexican War. For most of the details we are indebted to the army records and the research of Carlisle G. Raht.

Colonel Seawell's strategy, as soon as his tents were pitched, was quite simple. It was to quell the Indians in all

the Trans-Pecos region paralleling the Overland Trail. The conditions then prevailing are well told by Raht:

"It did not take long for the word to spread among the Indians that a fort had been established at Fort Davis, the purpose of which, as they saw it, was to cheat them out of their domain. They had seen the result of the establishment of other posts east of the Pecos River; and with prophetic eyes they saw truly the results of this new post, which had been established in the very heart of their last stronghold.

"To the Indians, depredating and murdering was a religion; and in the minds of these savages one idea became fixed and remained so, until the remnants of the last band of Mescalero Apaches was driven from their retreat in the mountains of the Big Bend, many years later. Their idea was to destroy Fort Davis, and thereby so greatly discourage the white settlers that the country west of the Pecos would be left to the Indians. In the twenty years following the establishment of Fort Davis, perhaps that fort stood more attacks from the Indians than any other post of that day.

"In pursuance of the policy, which after years of delay and indecision had been put into operation by the War Department, Colonel Seawell began a systematic campaign to drive back the Mescaleros from the strip of country bordering either side of the Overland Mail route. It was imperative that this be done, not only in order to protect the American settlers, but in order that the Government might not become embroiled with Mexico on account of our Indians raiding south of the Rio Grande.

"One advantageous condition resulted from this active campaign. There had been considerable complaint from the officers commanding posts on account of the unsatisfactory class of recruits (many young fellows, boys) which had filled up the ranks since the Mexican War. The Eighth Infantry had been exceptionally hard hit in this regard. Immediately following the war, in 1848, this regiment raised a purse of eight hundred dollars and employed counsel in Washington to have a law passed by which they would all be discharged. In 1849, the regiment was recruited almost entirely anew, and by the time these men had learned something of military tactics, they were transferred to the Pacific Division, and, for

the third time in six years, the regiment was built up of raw material."

The campaign against the Indians in the Davis Mountains in 1855 converted these raw troops into efficient and formidable fighting men. The militarily brief records of the Eighth show that the troops based at Fort Davis conducted innumerable sorties against the red men until the soldiers' departure in 1861, the soldier parties ranging from small detachments to one and two companies.

Colonel Seawell's active campaign against the Indians throughout the Big Bend caused many of the Apaches, Comanches and Lipans to enter Mexico, not as raiding parties but as settlers, if we may apply that term to those who merely used the northern mountains as a place from which to raid back into Texas and New Mexico.

Just when it seemed that the Davis Mountains had been cleared of marauders, an attack was made on a detachment of mounted riflemen of Fort Davis at El Muerto, or Dead Man's Hole. A sergeant and a musician were killed and the Indians withdrew a short distance to the west. The same party of Indians attacked the west-bound stage but, fortunately for those within, before serious damage was done the east-bound stagecoach appeared with an armed escort and the Indians were again driven off. Lieutenant Horace Randell, with a detachment of mounted riflemen, intercepted the Apaches in Canyon de los Lamentos, now known as Quitman Canyon, and engaged them in a running fight from there to Eagle Spring, and inflicted such punishment upon them that it undoubtedly discouraged others for a little while from crossing the Rio Grande.

One of the many drives against the Indians is that recorded on May 3, 1858. Lieutenant William B. Hazen and thirty men from four companies went on a scout to the Guadalupe Mountains, on the New Mexico border, "had a brush with the Indians, destroyed their camp, and captured one squaw and 26 horses and mules, returning to Fort Davis on the 20th of June."

In 1860 Company G "was broken up at Fort Davis, by an order of the War Department, on account of a disturbance originating in the murder of Private Pratt, Company G, by one Graham, a citizen."

In 1860, with the Indians pretty well subdued, Colonel Seawell requested or recommended that he be transferred to San Antonio along with the headquarters, records, staff and band of the Eighth. The transfer was accomplished as of June 30 of that year. Some of the troops remained until the following year.

While the Eighth established Fort Davis military post and incidentally started the town of the same name, it can hardly be said that the officers and men of the regiment were the "founding fathers" in the American meaning of those words. The military probably considered the location no more than a base for soldiers' operations against an enemy, a place to eat, drink, complain, and to do one's duty, until orders to move came along.

Nevertheless the outfit was the godfather of Fort Davis.

CHAPTER 8

THE CONFEDERATE YEARS

CASTING BACK to days and people long gone, one wonders what was uppermost in their thoughts. How much of a Secession war cloud had reached the western horizon in the spring of 1861? What did the men argue about in their barracks; what did the officers discuss around the billiard table at their club in old Fort Davis? They were federal troops in the South's land, far away from substantial military forces of their own. There was no telegraph — only couriers, and undoubtedly all sorts of rumors.

The set-up in this area had become pretty soft for the hard-fighting troops. The Apaches, the Comanches and the Lipans had pretty well taken the count, and long, hard raids after the Injuns were no longer a daily chore. Wagons laden with rich cargoes were rolling, largely unhindered, back and forth over the Overland Trail and the Mexican Chihuahua Trail. Civilization had its tent pegs down, corn planted, and children on its laps.

The Eighth Infantry was scattered up and down the land, at stage stations, waterholes and forts. One company only was at Fort Davis now — Company H, under Captain Edward D. Blake, who was the post commander *pro tempore*.

On April 1st of 1861, Brigadier General David E. Twiggs, commanding officer of the Eighth Military District of Texas, issued an order to all troops under his command to turn over their posts, camps, supplies and equipment to the Texas Commissioners, move "down the country, concentrate at Eagle or Beaver Lake, and there await the settlement of the

differences between the State of Texas and the United States." The records state that because of this order General Twiggs was dismissed from the Army of the United States.

Other people had other ideas. As soon as the bugles of war sounded, the Second Texas Confederate Cavalry, or mounted riflemen, was gotten together at San Antonio and ordered west under the command of John R. Baylor. This regiment, or a part of it, marched up Limpia Canyon to Fort Davis on April 13, 1861.

Somewhere it has been said that the Union troops had already withdrawn from their posts, but there is reason to believe that Captain Ed Blake and his men marched away from Fort Davis on one side when Baylor's Brigade heaved in sight on the other, for the order from Twiggs was to avoid conflict. And it is definite that there was no fighting in "the surrender of Fort Davis."

Blake, and no doubt numerous other units of the Eighth Regiment, marched eastward, and the Eighth's own record says that "they were captured near San Antonio by the Rebels." The Confederates gave these Union troops a choice: they could enter the Southern forces or they could take a parole, which meant to give their oath not to fight with and for the North under penalty of death if captured. A few enlisted on the Confederate side, many took the parole and promptly made their way out of Texas to Northern armies, and some kept their oath and made war profits in Texas.

When Company H of the Eighth marched away, it left E. P. Webster and Diedrick Dutchover, and no doubt other civilians, to say goodbye to them and howdy-do to the Confederates. Neither man, apparently, was mistreated by the newcomers, although Webster was from Illinois, Lincoln's home state.

For a while the business of the great trails continued uninterruptedly under the protection of the Confederates, but the Indians, perceiving the confusion of war between the white men, and probably incited by Union *agents provocateur*, renewed their activities, at first on isolated detachments, and then later on the main lines of traffic.

The Indians generally preferred to strike small outlying settlements rather than risk losing their warriors in a battle

with well-armed forces. On August 5, 1861, they attacked the home of Manuel Musquiz.

In 1854, with the coming of the troops, Señor Musquiz had settled in the beautiful canyon six miles southeast of Fort Davis. There he built a substantial ranch home along the edge of a well-watered meadow which was sufficiently large to furnish grazing for his cattle. The Musquiz settlement numbered twenty people, including the family and servants. At the time of the raid mentioned above, Señor Musquiz was away on a trip to Presidio del Norte, and during his absence old Nicolas, the Chief of the Apaches, with a large band of warriors, attacked the ranch, killing three members of the Musquiz household, and drove away the stock. A messenger was dispatched to Fort Davis for aid.

Lieutenant Ruben E. Mays was at that time in charge of a detachment of twenty men at the Fort. Not being advised as to the size of the raiding party, the Lieutenant took up the pursuit with twelve soldiers and four civilians and sent a courier to Fort Stockton asking for reinforcements from the main body of Confederate troops stationed there.

Lieutenant Mays followed the Indians' trail down Musquiz Canyon to Mitre Peak, thence on past Cathedral Peak below the present site of Alpine, where the trail entered one of the many canyons stretching south toward the Rio Grande. On August 11 the Lieutenant and his mounted detachment came upon a small band of Indians and engaged them in a running fight down a great canyon. This fight continued until they reached a point in the canyon where the sides rose precipitously several hundred feet, and suddenly a storm of arrows from overhead announced an Indian ambush. As Mays and his party turned to retreat, they found the passage blocked by a large group of warriors. The entire Mays party was killed with the exception of the Mexican guide, who fled up the side of the canyon and hid in a cave until the Indians abandoned their search for him. He then made his way on foot to Presidio with the news of the massacre.

A messenger sent on horseback from Presidio through Paisano Pass met the Fort Stockton reinforcements, but it was too late. They were unable to overtake the Indians, who had crossed the river and disappeared into the fastnesses

of Mexico. To this day no one knows just where the Mays massacre occurred, nor were the bodies ever found.

Chief Nicolas and groups of his warriors continued their depredations throughout the Trans-Pecos country, and serious efforts were made by the Confederate troops to punish and harass them for their various misdeeds. As they were beginning to make it hot for him, the crafty Nicolas called on Colonel McCarty, then in command at Fort Davis, and offered to negotiate peace terms. He went with Colonel McCarty to El Paso for a conference with Colonel John R. Baylor, who was in command of the area. They agreed on the terms of the peace, and Colonel McCarty and Chief Nicolas began the return journey to Fort Davis on the stagecoach, accompanied by an escort of soldiers. When the stagecoach reached Barrel Springs, the first stage station west of Fort Davis, Nicolas grabbed McCarty's pistol, jumped from the stagecoach, and ran up a nearby canyon where his band was waiting for him. Two soldiers who followed in close pursuit were killed. Colonel McCarty and his party followed the trail a short distance, but, fearing another ambush, gave up the chase. Later that day word was brought to the Fort that a herd of cattle being driven to Fort Davis by employees of George W. Baylor had been stolen and the herders killed by Nicolas and his band.

By 1862 traffic on the great freight trails had dwindled. Civilians had left Fort Davis; business was at a standstill; food supplies in the post, left by the Federals, were gone, and there was no place to buy more. Troops were no longer needed as there was nothing left to protect. The lines of communication eastward were long and thin. The Confederates moved on to El Paso; but Henry Skillman, for Confederate benefit, attempted to maintain a stage-line of communication with San Antonio.

Captain Skillman was a Kentuckian, a great blond giant with flowing beard and hair, the "Kit Carson" of the Big Bend. He had been Indian fighter, mail contractor, guide, and scout for the United States troops before the Civil War and then served in a similar capacity with the Confederacy. He was highly esteemed by all who knew him, but he had one serious fault. At intervals he drank to excess, and while under the influence of intoxicants he would shoot up the

town, compel the proprietors of all businesses to close their stores, and say that he was going to run the town himself. After he sobered up he was remorseful and would return to the scene, pay all damages, and apologize to everyone. But when he was sober he did not look with a kind eye on anyone else doing the same things he did when drunk. One time when an outlaw acted that way and terrified the town, Skillman disarmed him, gave him a good beating, and ran him out of town.

In the early days of the Civil War, as long as there were troops to guard the route, Skillman and a few others tried to keep the stagecoach going to maintain communications between San Antonio and the western forts. When this was no longer possible, he became a courier. In 1864, while Skillman and several of his companions were camped just below Presidio, Captain Albert H. French and a detachment of Union soldiers rushed upon the sleeping Confederates, and as they awoke, the Federals fired. Skillman was killed and several of his companions were wounded and captured.

During his lifetime Skillman had located a tract of land on the southern slope of the Davis Mountains, which is known today as Skillman's Grove. It is one of the most interesting and beautiful sites in the country and for more than fifty years has been the location of the Bloys Camp Meeting Association.

When the Southerners pulled out from Fort Davis, they left Diedrick Dutchover in charge of the post. During all these years Dutchover had remained with the mail company and had also established a small ranch down Limpia Canyon where he attempted to raise sheep, but he was continually robbed by the Indians. Dutchover had taken no part in the struggle between the North and South and neither had he joined in any fights with the Indians. It was supposed that he would go unmolested, and it was for this reason that he was left in charge of the post.

Hardly had the dust of the departing Confederates settled to earth when Chief Nicolas and two hundred and fifty painted braves swooped down on the emptied town and post. Realizing that Nicolas was in an ugly mood, Dutchover, a Mexican woman with two children, and four Americans, one of whom was quite ill, took refuge on one of the roofs behind

the parapet. (The post at Fort Davis was built of adobes, many of the buildings having the Mexican-style flat roof with a parapet three feet high extending above the roof on all sides.) They took what they could pick up in a hurry — a bag of flour and two casks of water. While the Indians looted and yelled in elation at their finds in the buildings below, the refugees remained quietly on the housetop. Fortunately they found some old wagon-wheel spokes that had been tossed on the roof out of sight by some lazy soldier, and with these they were able to kindle a tiny smokeless fire and bake saltless bread — little blobs of dough on the end of splinters.

The party remained on the housetop for forty-eight hours. By that time the Indians had grown tired of looting and destroying the buildings and had scattered over the countryside in search of stray cattle. The third night Dutchover and his party, with the exception of the sick man, crept out of their hiding place and struck out for Presidio, ninety-two miles away.

The day after Dutchover left, the stage from San Antonio arrived and found the sick man dead, but not scalped. The Indians considered it no honor to flaunt the hair of a man whose death they had not somehow caused. Four days later, in an exhausted and starving condition, Dutchover, the three Americans, the Mexican woman and the children, staggered into Presidio.

Now there began as sordid a period as old Fort Davis could ever know. In the five years that ensued, the post lay free and open to any prowlers or shiftless dwellers — renegade Indians, dissolute, dishonorably discharged soldiers who had become riffraff, heelflies, men dodging war service for the South, hiding there — all a disreputable crew living in rags and uncleanness, gambling, drinking, fighting, killing, slaughtering stray cattle, sheep and goats left by departing settlers and seizing vegetables and grain raised in the little fields along La Limpia by industrious Mexicans. When these sources played out, hunger compelled the inhabitants to hunt for greener fields, until at last the post lay empty, desolate and lonely, with gaping holes of doors and windows, and with many of the *jacals*, where once charming women and busy men had talked, laughed and sung, torn down for fuel. In time vandalism finished off what irresponsibility had

started. The records of the War Department state that the post was "almost completely destroyed by the Indians" by the time of the reoccupation.

There is one more available account of Confederate troops being at Fort Davis. It came to this writer from County Commissioner William L. (Uncle Billy) Kingston, who knew an Adam Bradford in Mason County fifty years before. Bradford, who had been a cattle buyer for the Confederates early in the war, told Mr. Kingston many stories of the western country. He said that in 1864 he was in El Paso and came back east with the retreating Confederate Sibley's Brigade. It was a lean and drouthy year, and when the brigade reached Fort Davis with its wagons and cannon, the horses were scrawny and weak. They stopped at the Fort for a breathing spell, then moved on dispiritedly. About sixteen miles down Limpia Canyon, where it spreads out into a wide valley—so Adam Bradford told Bill Kingston—the weary soldiers buried two brass cannon and other equipment. They have never been unearthed.

CHAPTER 9

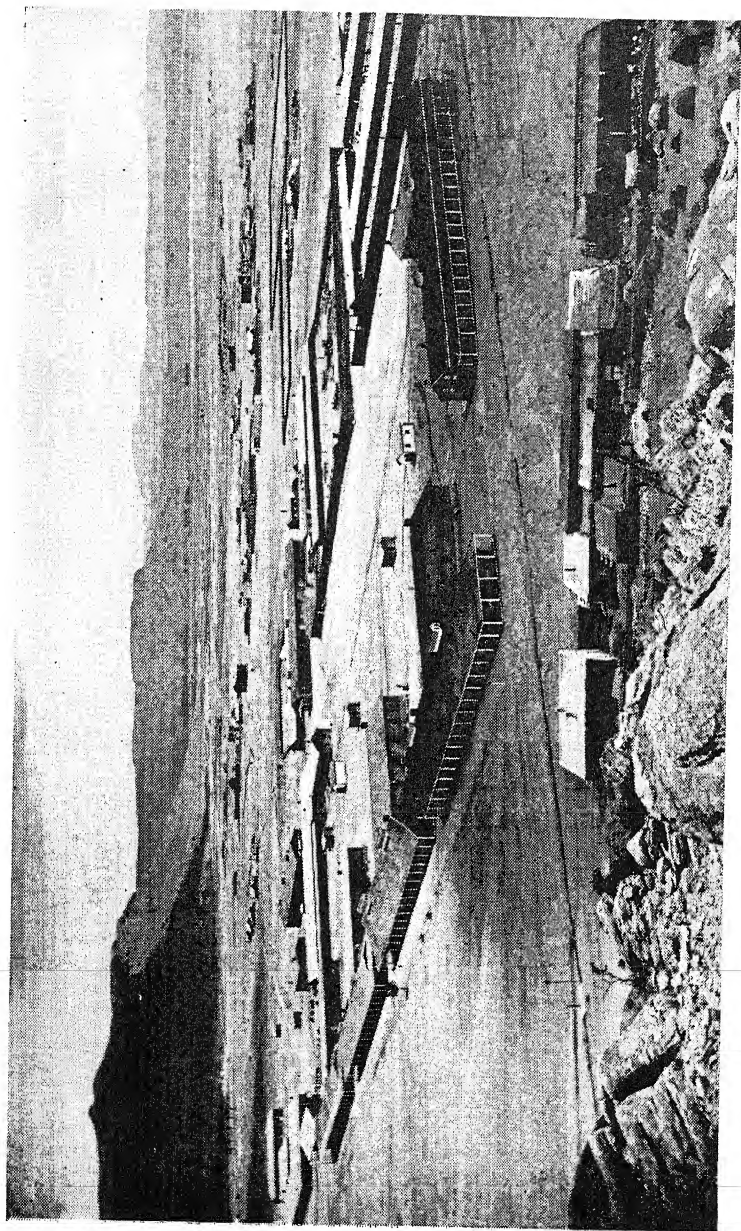
THE FORT IS REBUILT

FORT DAVIS was reoccupied by United States soldiers on July 1, 1867, they being four troops of the Ninth Cavalry under command of Lieutenant Colonel Wesley Merritt. They returned to ruins and desolation, with few civilians left, and with the Indians again watching from the crannies of the rimrocks, armed now largely with old muskets and rifles rather than with bows and arrows.

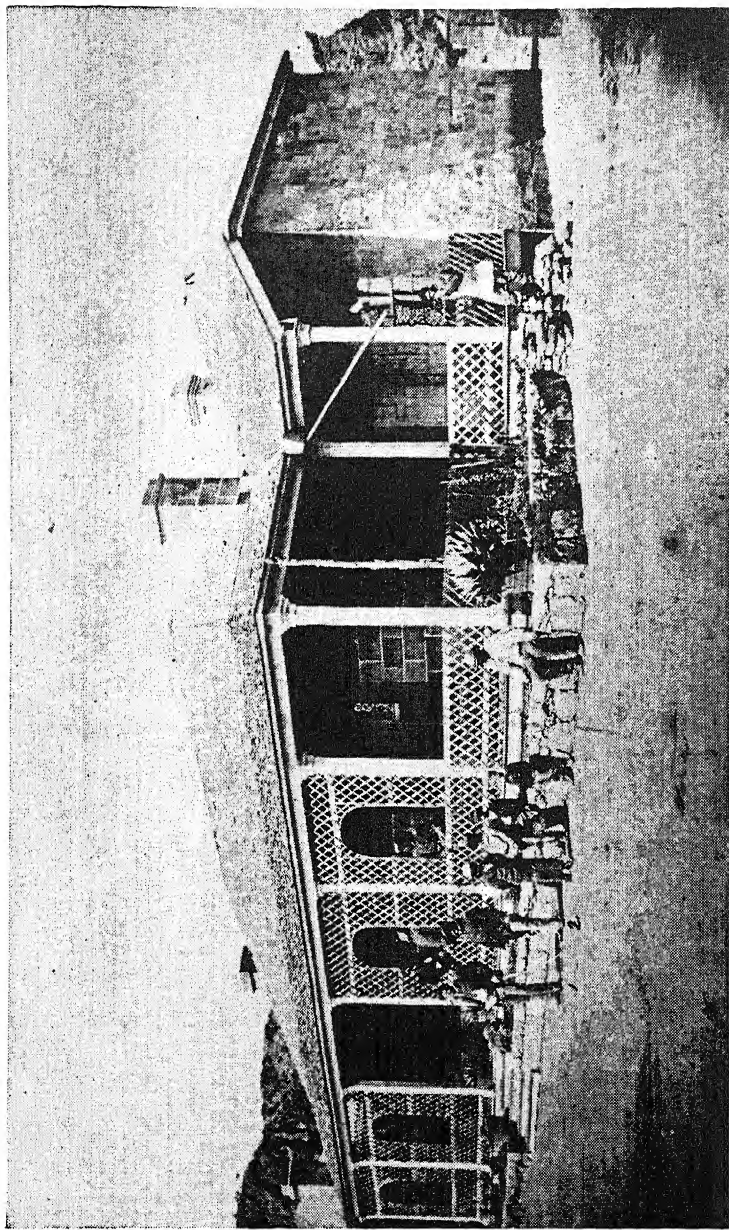
It was up to the newcomers to build a post for their own occupancy. The construction must have been started as soon as they could get themselves oriented. On November 29, 1867, a new lease was executed with John James by Major J. G. C. Lee acting for the United States. Here is another Lee in the picture. It isn't surprising that the story grew in after years that General Robert E. Lee was here before the Civil War.

The lease was effective as of July 1 that year at \$900 per annum, payable monthly. There was no clause for the right of purchase by the government.

Some of the materials that went into the new structures were brought over the long road from San Antonio in the great-wheeled wagons, and from even farther away. Bricks have been found in the tumbling chimneys of the present buildings bearing the moulded-in lettering "Evans & Howard, St. Louis, Mo." The old sawmill in the rear of the box canyon had long since disappeared, and Colonel Merritt had logs hauled from the pine forest in Limpia Canyon which



BARRACKS AND CORRALS, 1885



COLONEL'S HOUSE ABOUT 1880

had been located first by Major Simonson back in 1854. These were sawed by hand until sawmills could be procured. One of these was placed in Limpia and the other one farther up at the head of Madera Canyon, which even today is known as Sawmill Canyon. It abuts against Mount Livermore. The lumber road to the upper Limpia was direct, but the timber from Madera had to be loaded upon ox wagons, taken down Madera Canyon a short way, then by way of HO Canyon and the west side of the Davis Mountains, back to the Fort, a long and costly haul. Yet it was only in these two canyons that the trees grew large enough to make the lumber that was needed.

A descriptive article on Fort Davis, three large pages, was printed by the Surgeon General's office based on a report of June 20, 1870. It shows plans and accomplishments, and gives other information, on which much of this chapter is based. It says that the climate was delightful and very healthful, and sudden changes of temperature were not so common as in other parts of Texas. There was but a small amount of rainfall during the year, and that occurred chiefly in June and July, and scarcely any snow. January was the coldest month, of which the mean temperature was 42 degrees, maximum 62 degrees, minimum 15 degrees, while in August, the warmest month, the mean temperature was 74 degrees, maximum 87 degrees, minimum 62 degrees.

There were no local causes of disease at this post. During the summers of 1867 and 1868 dysentery and scurvy prevailed very extensively and fatally. The causes of the prevalence of these diseases, however, at that time, were probably, of the first, the use of water rendered impure by long neglect, and a system of acclimation the troops were undergoing; of the second, an irregular supply of provisions. But during the entire year of 1869, and later, scarcely any sickness occurred at this post. West winds prevailed, and in spring were very strong.

The officers' quarters were located in a line running north and south across the mouth of the canyon. These were nineteen in number, one story, a covered porch in front and rear along the entire building, a separate house for each officer and distant from each other 24 feet, the commanding officer's in the center, each third building a captain's set, and

on either side a lieutenant's set; each of these consisted of a main building, 48 by 21 feet, containing two rooms, each 15 by 18 feet and 14 feet high, with a hall between, 12 by 18 feet; in addition, the commanding officer's had a wing, 41 by 21 feet, containing two rooms, each 15 by 15 feet; in all four rooms. The captain's set had each a wing, 21 by 18 feet, containing one room 15 by 15 feet; in the main line were thirteen of these buildings, and on each flank adjoining were three additional. Four were built of native limestone from a quarry one mile from the post, the rest of adobe; all had shingle roofs, and were warmed by open fireplaces. Only nine of these buildings were completed at the time of the report in 1870. Subsequently four additional quarters of adobe were built in Officers' Row and four more at the foot of the mountains just to the north, one as a house for the chaplain and the others for non-commissioned officers.

East of, and in a line parallel with, the officers' quarters, with a parade of 500 feet in width intervening, were located the barracks, four separate buildings, distant from each other 30 feet, built of adobe, plastered inside and out and ceiled, a wide covered porch extending entirely around. Each barrack was 186 feet long and 27 feet wide, and contained two dormitories, separated by a passageway, 27 by 12 feet, which led to a building, 86 by 27 feet, containing the messroom, 50 by 24 feet, the kitchen, 20 by 24 feet, and store-room, 10 by 24 feet. Each dormitory was 24 by 82 feet and 12 feet high, containing 23,760 cubic feet of air space. They were warmed by open fireplaces, and ventilated by large windows, four in the opposite sides of each room, and by a large ventilator in the ceiling, 20 by 4 feet. Only two of these barracks were completed before 1870; two others in the same line were completed soon thereafter; and subsequently two more, one behind the first and the other behind the fourth barracks, were built. Large and commodious sinks were placed 200 feet in the rear. There were no permanent quarters for laundresses or married men.

On the north side of the parade, midway between the barracks and officers' quarters, were the executive offices, three rooms, each 15 by 18 feet. On the north side of the parade, and near the executive offices, was the guardhouse, built of limestone, 54 by 22 feet, and containing the guard-

room, 13 by 15 feet and 11 feet high, three cells, each $4\frac{1}{2}$ by 9 feet, and the prisoners' room, 15 by 16 feet. The cells were between the prisoners' room and the guardroom, and a passage, 6 feet wide, by the cells communicated with these two rooms. It was warmed by an open fireplace and ventilated by holes, 12 by 3 inches, in the upper part of the walls and a large ventilator in the ceiling. The average number confined monthly was 15.

In the rear of the barracks, at a distance of about 700 feet, were the quartermaster's and company stables and corrals. The former occupied a space 367 by 300 feet, enclosed by walls built of adobe, 10 feet high. Along two of these walls were the stables, well roofed but otherwise open, the climate being such that additional shelter for the stock was not required. Separated from this 70 feet were the company stables, enclosing a space 350 by 450 feet, constructed like those just described, with stalls on all sides, capable of accommodating 400 horses.

The quartermaster's and commissary storehouses were located respectively north and south of the corrals, 100 feet distant. They were each 110 feet long by 27 feet wide, constructed of adobe and not ceiled.

The post bakery later completed was situated south of the commissary storehouse, and consisted of one room, 40 by 16 feet, and one oven with a capacity of 600 loaves.

A hospital, after the plan published in Circular No. 4, Surgeon General's Office, Washington, April 27, 1867, was begun in February, 1869. It was located north of the executive offices, about 400 feet therefrom, at the foot of the mountain, fronting east of south. It was being constructed of native limestone, and the walls of the entire building had reached a height of 8 feet when work upon it, together with that upon a large part of the post, was suspended, prior to the report of June 20, 1870. The hospital in use at that time was a temporary adobe building, 50 by 19 feet, which contained one ward, 35 by 17 feet, with a capacity of 14 beds, and the dispensary, 13 by 15 feet. It was plastered inside and whitewashed, well lighted and ventilated by numerous small holes in the lower and upper part of the walls. There was an L addition containing the dining room, 8 by 10 feet, and the kitchen 12 by 16 feet. The entire building was hastily and

temporarily constructed, but, with some repairs later put upon it, answered all the requirements of the post. It was situated about 500 feet in the rear of the officers' quarters, midway up the canyon. A full supply of medical stores was on hand, and for eighteen months there had been no difficulty in obtaining supplies regularly and without delay by requisitions upon the medical purveyor at New Orleans.

The quartermaster at Fort Davis complained in 1868 of the unfinished buildings on the post. In August, 1869, a letter published in a San Antonio paper described the condition of the unfinished buildings and blamed it on corruption by the quartermaster and his protection by the commanding officer. This charge of corruption may be explained by another story. It has been told that the Fort Davis quartermaster was allowed \$30,000 to construct officers' quarters. By the time two or three stone buildings were completed he asked for more funds. He was reminded of the appropriation, and he said it had been expended in opening the rock quarry a couple of miles or so southeast of the post, and in putting up two or three houses. The cost had been higher than anticipated.

When quarters No. 7, about the middle of Officers' Row, was completed, Colonel Merritt moved in, and there he had the first Christmas tree ever heard of at Fort Davis.

In the year of the reoccupation a man named A. J. Buckoz was given permission to serve as post trader. There must have been a shift in politics up the line, and also of troops at the post, for in 1871 Lieutenant Colonel William R. Shafter of the 24th Infantry was in command of the post, with Colonel Merritt gone. And Colonel Shafter wrote a letter about the Buckoz case:

"Said Buckoz asserted that he spent \$43,000 in erecting buildings 200 yards from the post adjutant's office and installed \$15,000 to \$20,000 worth of stock for the purpose of supplying the post with merchandise with assurance of every encouragement being extended him, and that now he is ordered off without any days of grace for collecting debts owed him or for disposing of his stock, that he was advised only that one Mr. Blank had been named to the position of Post Trader by the Secretary of War."

So far as available records are concerned, the only satis-

faction Colonel Shafter or Mr. Buckoz ever got from the letter was a memo signed by the Secretary of War, pinned to the letter and returned, with the notation "Buckoz buildings may be purchased if it would be economical." Cold comfort no doubt for the probably raging Buckoz

A captain at the post hastened to put in a suggestion that the Buckoz buildings would make a nice quartermaster's warehouse and an office, while somebody else stuck in his thumb to say "or a hospital."

The matter of a hospital must have sorely taxed the patience of the patients. The permanent housery for the sick recommended for the new post was begun in February, 1869, you remember, north of where the present chapel stands, with work stopped when the walls were eight feet high. The hospital then in use was a "temporary adobe structure 500 feet west and in rear of officers' quarters."

In September, 1873, a further kick was registered: "It is both desirable and necessary that a new hospital be erected at this post. The building at present in use is not only inadequate but extremely uncomfortable in every respect. It is in continual need of repairs because of its leaky condition; it is infested with chinchies; the ceiling, such as exists, affords ample harborage to centipedes; it is badly heated and ventilation has been a matter of study. During the past season I was compelled to use the entire building, save two very small rooms, the kitchen and mess room, the latter 8x10 feet, for the accommodation of the sick."

There must have been some nice conflict between the surgeon and the colonel commander, for Shafter is found saying to higher brass hats: "The post surgeon is not in favor of repairing present hospital, but wishes a small hospital built of twelve beds, but while the hospital is not so conveniently arranged as the one desired it has been found sufficient for all patients, even when as many as seven companies and two or three hundred employees are in residence. There are now but three companies and four or five employees at the post."

In the long run, though, the doctor must have won out, for notations of 1874 say that the War Department approved the erection of a 12-bed hospital, no larger "because the healthful climate at the post makes one that size abundantly

large for the post." This one was to cost not to exceed \$7,500.

It is probable that while the new hospital was being constructed on the same site in Hospital Canyon approximately 500 feet behind Officers' Row, the earlier unfinished building to the north was completed as an adobe structure and was used at least temporarily. In 1946 D. A. Simmons, who had recently purchased the Fort property, in looking at the foundation and fallen adobe walls at this site, discovered in a small ravine at the corner of the foundation a large quantity of broken glass bottles two feet below the surface. Among them the bottom of a bottle protruded an inch or two out of the soil. It was carefully dug up and was found to be a complete medical bottle marked "U.S.A. Hospital Department."

Certainly the new hospital back in the canyon was built, for in 1883 a report on the post buildings contained the notation "Hospital main building 45 ft. 6 inches, seven rooms, store house, ward 27 ft. 6 inches — all of adobe structure with tin roof, condition fair." A picture of the hospital taken about that time shows this building in operation and about it cluster the Chief Surgeon's home, a dispensary, and several other small buildings. The ruins of all these buildings still stand in Hospital Canyon some distance behind Officers' Row.

The post was supplied with water distributed by means of a water wagon from the Limpia Creek, a small stream running through Limpia Canyon and the northern part of the reservation. It was always clear, pure, and cool, not very hard, containing carbonate of lime and a small amount of organic matter, during the season of heavy rains, which was probably washed from the mountain at the foot of which it runs. Observation and experience showed that it did not affect those using it in any manner and no means of purification had been resorted to. There was also a large spring within the limits of the post, the water from which was harder than that from the Limpia. This water, it appeared, was once, for some reasons unknown, condemned as unfit for potable purposes. It did not contain either organic or alkaline matter sufficient to render it unhealthful, and if it was, the cause was probably neglect during the long time the post was unoccupied. For extinguishing fire a sufficient number

of barrels and buckets were kept constantly filled with water and placed at proper and convenient points.

The general conformation of the ground, gradually sloping from the post, was such that but little artificial drainage was necessary. Slops and refuse were collected in barrels, and emptied some distance from the post.

The post garden, heretofore situated on the creek, had been very successful, but the post commander, thinking it not sufficiently large, established it at Musquiz' ranch, about 8 miles from the post. It was rich prairie soil, and when well established would probably yield an abundant supply of all vegetables. But owing to the labor of preparing the new soil and the continued dry weather, it did not succeed.

Domestic animals were scarce and inferior. Poultry of all kinds, butter, milk, eggs, etc., were scarce and commanded high prices.

The El Paso and San Antonio mail line, driving four-mule coaches, and running twice a week, communicated with San Antonio, the nearest and largest city. The communication was liable to frequent interruptions by floods and Indians. The time required for a communication to reach department headquarters was about ten days, and Washington from fifteen to eighteen days.

The duties of the troops were the usual garrison and guard duty, and much scouting also. Owing to the large amount of work going on at the post and the very limited number of employees, much irregular work was necessarily imposed upon the troops and greatly interfered with their legitimate duties as soldiers. There were no permanent facilities for bathing, but it was contemplated to erect bathing houses on the Limpia, where the troops could bathe.

On April 24, 1873, Samuel A. Maverick of San Antonio patented from the state the 320 acres lying just east of the fort, or reservation, as it was called. That bit of land is to this day referred to by older citizens of Fort Davis as the "parade ground." It was also a drill field. The original parade in front of Officers' Row was too small any longer to accommodate the number of troops often there, sometimes exceeding a regiment. Sam Maverick was one Texan who gave the English language a word — maverick, meaning throughout the West an unbranded calf, and extended in general usage now

to human beings who may be a bit "odd," or have strayed away from the conventions, become a lone wolf, a pariah, a recluse, not fitting in somehow with their fellow men. Maverick sold the land to Dan Murphy and Murphy sold it to the United States as of May 24, 1883. The Government later sold a part of it to Anton Aggerman of Fort Davis and to others, at auction.

Fort Davis, by reason of its delightful climate, its healthfulness and comfortable quarters, was one of the most desirable posts on the Texas frontier, and the surrounding country might be called grand and picturesque. In front of the post the country was undulating for a distance of fifteen or twenty miles, then started up abruptly high mountains. On either side were mountains ascending abruptly some distance and capped by immense masses of unstratified basalt or trap rocks. At the base were numerous stones of various sizes, from small pebbles to immense boulders. One range of hills adjoining the post was formed almost entirely of limestone, from which was quarried the stone used in constructing the post.

CHAPTER 10

INDIAN EMILY

*A*FTER THE REOCCUPATION of Fort Davis, the little settlement, located as it was in the heart of the Apache country, stood the brunt of the Indian attacks. One morning the inhabitants were awakened by the war whoop, as the Apaches poured into the outskirts of the town from the nearby hills and canyons. The surprise was complete; but, aided by the presence of several large freight outfits which had camped in Fort Davis on their way over the Chihuahua Trail, the soldiers and citizens managed to beat off the attack and inflict severe punishment on the marauders. Many dead and wounded Indians were left on the ground.

Among the wounded left behind was an Indian girl, who was later named Emily. She was badly wounded and was being taken to the hospital with the other injured when Mrs. Easton, mother of Lieutenant Thomas Easton, insisted on taking charge of her. She put her in the adobe hut behind their house in Officers' Row and nursed her back to health. Emily stayed on as a maid and companion to Mrs. Easton. She grew accustomed to the ways of the whites and her stay among them promised to be permanent; that is, until the Nelsons moved to Fort Davis with their beautiful daughter Mary. For Emily was in love with Tom; but Tom fell in love with Mary. The day that Tom's engagement to beautiful Mary Nelson was announced, Emily quietly slipped away.

Mrs. Easton was very fond of Emily, missed her, and hoped for her return, but the months stretched into a year, with no word of the Apache girl. Mrs. Easton was genuinely

fond of her new daughter, but this in nowise caused her to forget Emily.

The Apaches again were becoming troublesome and their raids were more frequent and increasing in boldness. The soldiers were kept busy, the sentries doubled, and the post command was continually on the lookout for an attack on Fort Davis itself.

One night during this troublesome period a sentry thought he heard someone trying to slip past him. He instantly called, "Halt, or I fire!" He received no reply, and the intruder broke into a run toward the post buildings. He fired, and a woman screamed. It was Emily, mortally wounded. She was carried to the Colonel's house, where she called for Mrs. Easton. As soon as her friend arrived, Emily, with her dying breath, gasped out: "I hear talk — all my people coming to kill by light of morning — I tell you so Tom no get killed — goodbye." And the beautiful Indian girl died.

Before sunup the next morning the Apaches did come, and in sufficient force to have annihilated the Fort and the settlement had they been unprepared. But Emily's warning had been in time to alert the post, and the Indians were beaten back with heavy losses.

A grave was dug in the rocky soil at the foot of the mountain between the post buildings and Limpia Creek, not far from the old pumphouse; and there, with loving hands, her friends left her to her eternal sleep. The post carpenter fashioned a rough headboard, and on it put the words, "Indian Squaw — Killed by Accident."

Time obliterated this monument. In 1936 the State of Texas, through its Centennial Commission, desired to erect a more fitting monument to the Indian girl who had given her life to protect her friends, and Warren D. and Arthur Bloys, in the presence of the writer of this book, located the little heap of rocks which remained to mark the spot, and here a granite monument was erected, bearing the star of the State of Texas at the top and the following inscription:

HERE LIES INDIAN EMILY
AN APACHE GIRL
WHOSE LOVE FOR A

INDIAN EMILY

63

YOUNG OFFICER INDUCED
HER TO GIVE WARNING OF
AN INDIAN ATTACK.
MISTAKEN FOR AN ENEMY
SHE WAS SHOT BY A
SENTRY, BUT SAVED THE
GARRISON FROM MASSACRE.

CHAPTER 11

MORE INDIAN WARS

THE PHYSICAL REBUILDING of the Fort and its reoccupation by the Federal troops had been made necessary by the fact that the entire Big Bend area, with the exception of the town of El Paso and the village of Presidio, had been reoccupied by the Indians. The Apaches had reestablished their *rancherias* in the Davis Mountains and in the Chisos. Espejo (Spanish for "Looking-Glass") — not the Spanish lieutenant of 1583, but a new Espejo, an Apache Indian chief — was ranging the country far and wide, not only over their former territory but also through the Pecos River country to the east which had formerly been the stamping ground of the Comanches. The Comanches had not been driven off by the Apaches, but they had been severely punished and driven into the far Panhandle of Texas just before the Civil War by Captain Sul Ross, later Governor of Texas, with a mixed troop of cavalry and mounted frontiersmen.

The Civil War being over, the great freight outfits reassembled and again began to move over the Overland Trail. John Edgar, with an outfit of two hundred head of mules and twenty wagons, was the first on the trail, followed some distance behind by his brother James, with a train of the same size. On arriving at Wild Rose Pass, John Edgar found his way blocked by Espejo and approximately one hundred Apache warriors. The Indian chief came forward under a flag of truce to make inventory of his opposition and, while the twenty loaded wagons aroused his cupidity, he decided that the twenty-five well-armed frontiersmen were too for-

midable for an outright attack. No treaty was arrived at, so Espejo withdrew farther into the canyon, and Edgar, fearing an ambush, turned back to Fort Stockton to join forces with the other party so that they might proceed in force on to El Paso.

In 1866 the Post Office Department made a contract with Fickland & Sawyer to start the mails running again, and the first stage started out with an escort of armed guards under Captain T. A. Wilson and Sam Miller, both of whom had been with Sibley's Brigade in the Big Bend. They were met at Escondido Springs by Espejo, accompanied by three hundred and fifty Indians. Captain Wilson, an old Indian fighter, with his forty men, dug in on a hill and prepared to fight. For two days Espejo and his Indians moved about them in a wide circle just out of range of their long rifles. Espejo, as was his custom, offered to make a treaty. Captain Wilson did not fall into such a trap, as he figured there was nothing about which a treaty could be made. Seeing that the party had both food and water and were well armed, the Indians then withdrew.

The next party to start through the mountains was composed of men from the North who knew nothing of Indian warfare, and Espejo stopped them at Wild Rose Pass and offered to make a treaty. The Mexican guides advised against it, but the leader of the party, Mr. Davis, drew up a formal treaty with Espejo and the Indians withdrew. As soon as the party started forward again, the Indians attacked in full force. Several of the party were killed, and horses and wagons were stolen. The residue of the party made their way back, walking, to Fort Stockton.

With the return of the troops to Fort Davis in 1867 it again became the most important town in the Trans-Pecos country. It was the crossroad of the two trails and the headquarters for travelers as well as the hunters who came down from the mountains with their horses laden with antelope, venison, bear meat, and the honey of the wild bees.

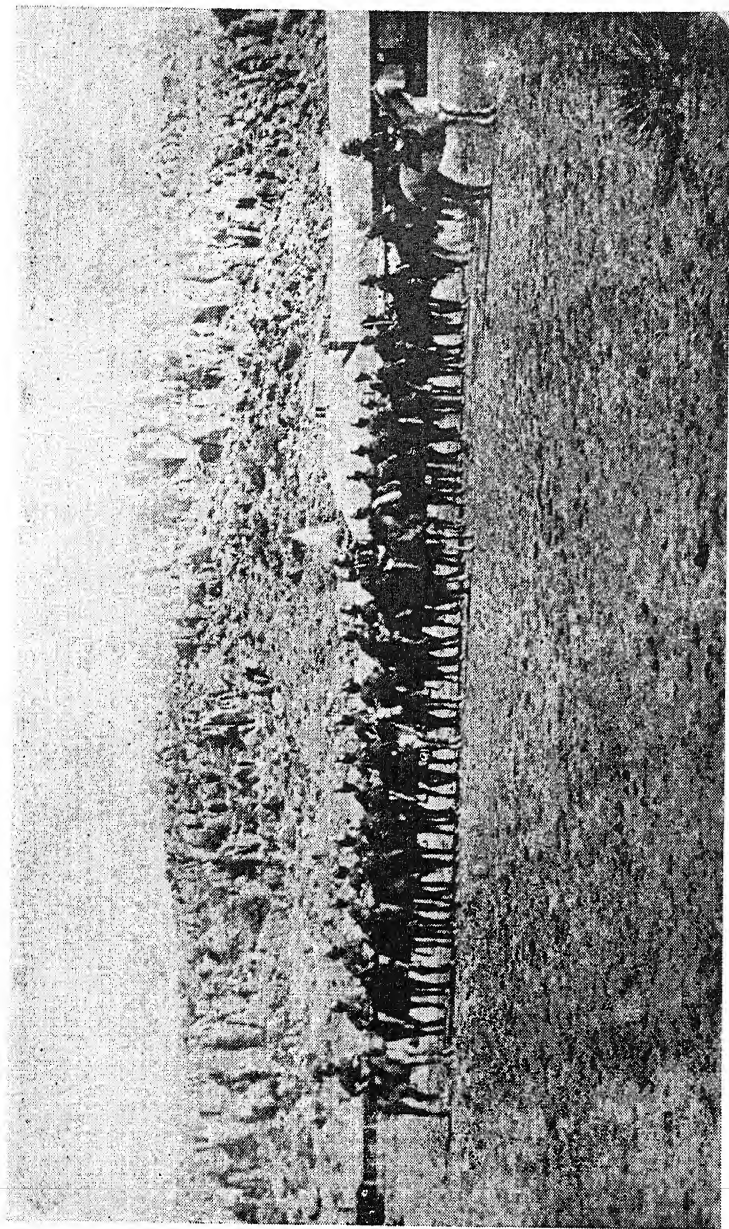
The Indians had withdrawn farther back into the mountains, but they were not gone. Hardly had the Fort been reestablished when 165 head of cattle and 150 work oxen being herded by Mexicans employed by Sam Miller were attacked just east of the post by the Apaches; the cattle

stampeded and the herders were killed. A detachment from the Fort, guided by Miller, followed the well-marked trail down Limpia Canyon along the north slopes of the mountains past Gomez Peak and on north toward the Guadalupe Mountains. Here the signs showed that several other Indian parties had gathered, so the chase was abandoned and the party returned to Fort Davis.

In the early seventies the Indians were kept in check by a vigorous campaign directed against them from the Fort under the immediate command of Lieutenant John L. Bullis of the Twenty-Fifth Infantry, assisted by a group of Seminole Indian scouts. His record was such that Brigadier General D. S. Stanley, in recommending Bullis for promotion, declared that his career in the Trans-Pecos country was the best of any Indian fighter in the history of the United States Army. This is the same Captain Bullis who was then transferred to the Twenty-Fourth Infantry to keep in check the Comanches in Arizona and of whom Frederick Remington, the great Western artist, wrote about years ago in *Century Magazine*. He said:

"As I have observed him in the discharge of his duties, I have no doubt that he pays high life insurance premiums. He does not seem to fear the beetle-browed pack of murderers with whom he has to deal, for he has spent his life in command of Indian scouts and not only understands their character but has gotten out of the habit of fearing anything. If the deeds of this officer had been on civilized battle fields instead of in silently leading a pack of savages over the desert wastes of the Rio Grande, they would have gotten him his niche in the Temple of Fame. But they are locked up in the gossip of the Army's mess-room, and end in the soldiers' matter-of-fact joke about how Bullis used to eat his provisions in the field, by opening a can a day from a pack, and, whether it was peaches or corned beef, making it suffice. The Indians regard him as almost supernatural, and speak of the 'Whirlwind' with many grunts of admiration, as they narrate his wonderful achievements."

The Seminole scouts Bullis led had at one time been slaves of the Kickapoo Indians. Some of them had Negro blood, and upon the outbreak of the Civil War the Kickapoos had moved to Mexico, taking their half-breed slaves with



CAVALRY TROOP AT OLD FORT DAVIS, 1874

them. After the war was over, many of them returned and some of the Seminoles signed up as scouts with the troops.

Not all of the soldiers at the Fort were as immune to Indian attacks as was Bullis. In 1875 the Indians had become so bold that they made raids right into the Fort itself. One soldier was shot while he was working in the post garden. At another time the sheep and goats in Dan Murphy's corral near the spring were driven off into the mountains.

One day in 1877 E. P. Webster, who was in charge of the stage stand at Fort Davis, being short a stagecoach driver, mounted the driver's seat himself. Accompanied by two Negro soldiers from the Fort who were assigned to him as a guard, he started west. As they passed El Muerto the stage was ambushed by Indians who came in from both sides of the road. Webster, an experienced man, gave full rein to his four wild mules and they began to run the gauntlet. Webster was too busy with his mules to use the six-shooters at his side, but the soldiers, armed with army rifles, returned the fire of the racing Indians. The Indians, although poorly mounted, were gaining rapidly, and one of the Negro soldiers, deciding that the inside of the stage was less exposed, scrambled over the top to get inside. His gun caught in the rear wheel and was jerked out of his hand, to the great glee of the pursuing Indians. The mules, however, outraced the Indians to the next stand, where the discomfited soldier was placed under arrest, returned to the Fort, and, as his punishment for seeking a safer position and losing his gun, was placed on night sentry duty without arms. At the end of the year he was dismissed from the service.

Indian wars broke out with renewed fury in 1878. The Mescalero Apaches were now led by their chief Victorio, who raided back and forth constantly between the mountains of the Trans-Pecos and New Mexico, on the one hand, and those of northern Mexico on the other. They were making their last bitter stand to regain possession of their homeland peaks and canyons, their waterholes and hunting grounds. The conditions in the immediate vicinity of Fort Davis are shown in a letter written by County Judge A. W. Chaney of Presidio County (which was then much larger than the present Presidio County and Fort Davis was the county seat). He was addressing the Adjutant General of Texas under whose

command the Texas Rangers functioned.

“Fort Davis, Texas, April 23rd, 1878

“SIR — I have the honor to report that on Saturday the 20th inst the Indians killed the mail carrier nineteen miles east of this place, and about one mile east of a point where the road leaves the US Mail Road leading to a settlement known here as Toyah Creek Settlement, and on yesterday morning three men and two horses were found dead, killed by the Indians, about one mile this side of where the mail carrier was killed and just where Toyah Creek Road leaves the mail road, these last men from indications on the ground had evidently made a fight, but had all been killed, there are two other murders by the Indians reported between here and the Pecos, within the last two weeks.

“It is reported this morning that the recent depredations are being committed by Indians from San Carlos, Mexico; however, their depredations appear to me to extend over too wide a stretch of country for the number of Indians that live there, in addition to the lives lost as above stated there has been stolen in the vicinity some thirty head of horses and mules.

“I am induced to report this to you from the fact of Mr. Thomas P Martin, Priv. Sec. to the Governor, and Mr. Zimpleman who were in May last coming directly from Austin, Mr. Martin informing me that on the eve of starting up he had called at Your office and made inquiry as to the danger from Indians up here and had been informed then that there were none in the country and had not been for several years, while to my certain knowledge from about the second week in January up to that time there had been picked off by Indians *sixteen men* in the vicinity of Fort Davis.

“I do not know as the state could do any more for us than it is now doing in sending arms to settlements to protect themselves with or that the U. S. troops can reasonably be expected to do much more than they have done but it appears to me that Your means of getting information as to these killings and stealings are singularly defective and almost criminally so, when persons traveling through here are advised that there are no Indians in this country, and to

some extent are induced to believe carrying arms an unnecessary incumbrance.

"I have the honor to be
Your Obedient Servant

A. W. CHANEY,
County Judge Presidio County."

In 1879 Victorio, who had been forcibly restrained on the Apache Reservation near Fort Staunton, New Mexico, escaped, gathered 150 warriors about him, first went into Mexico and then entered the Big Bend about forty miles below Fort Quitman. He was driven back into Mexico by the Texas Rangers under Colonel George W. Baylor. But hardly had the Texans finished congratulating themselves that they were rid of him for a while than the Indians appeared again and killed General Byrne, who was passenger on the stagecoach driving from Fort Davis to Fort Quitman.

Captain Coldwell from Fort Davis had been ordered by General Jones to make a routine inspection at Ysleta, and, finding nothing of particular interest, he had started on the return trip to Fort Davis. They passed Eighteen Mile Water Hole, not knowing that a few hundred yards away in a little canyon that very day Victorio's men had fallen upon a scouting party of Tenth Cavalry men and killed six of them. Three miles farther they came upon a buckboard, used to supplement the mail coach, with one of its mules dead and the other gone. On the ground behind it, killed by the Indians, was the driver, Baker, and a passenger. The evidence showed that the Indians jumped them at the water hole and pursued them until one mule was killed, and that the two men had died fighting.

Colonel Grierson at that time was at Eagle Springs with a troop of cavalry, and he started in pursuit of Victorio and his men. He set a trap at Fresno Springs, but just before the Indians rode into it they met a wagon train, which they attacked, and they were in turn driven off by Grierson's mounted men and they fled back into Mexico.

Victorio now began to murder the Mexicans right and left, and the officials on that side of the border asked for help. Colonel Baylor, with a company of his Rangers, joined the

Mexican soldiers to run him down. The Indians trapped and massacred several small groups of Mexican citizens and had one brief skirmish with Colonel Baylor and his men in which several Indians were killed, but the main body of Indians retired into the mountains of Mexico. Victorio was subsequently killed by a Tarahumar Indian, thus ridding the border of its most recent and one of its fiercest enemies.

Some years ago this writer saw a map prepared by Ordnance Sergeant R. F. Joyce at the direction of General B. H. Grierson and which was then in possession of his son, George Grierson of Fort Davis, which showed the operations of the United States troops under his command in the Indian country of West Texas from 1878 to 1880. It was entitled:

"Map of the Military District of the Pecos, Dept. of Texas. Prepared under the supervision of the District Commander, Col. B. H. Grierson, 10th Cavalry, from the official reports, maps, etc., etc., on file at District Headquarters, exhibiting the operations of the troops of his command during the years of 1878, 1879 and 1880. Drawn by Ord. Sgt. R. F. Joyce, U. S. A."

This map showed that scouting parties, small detachments, and larger bodies of troops up to the entire regiment had traveled a total of 137,710 miles in connection with the operations against the Indians.

CHAPTER 12

POST-BELLUM DAYS AT FORT DAVIS

THE RETURN of the troops brought storekeepers, liquor vendors, and beef contractors, besides the transient trains of men commercially interested in El Paso and Mexico via the Overland and Chihuahua Trails.

Dan Murphy rebuilt his store just off the military reservation south of the cottonwood grove and the spring. Raht says that Abbott & Davis, the post traders, opened their place on the opposite side of the post. It is known that in 1885 they had their store up on the rocks south of the post and west of Murphy's. An old time picture (about 1885) shows a row of buildings there which housed not only Abbott & Davis but also a telegraph office, officers' club, barbershop, and possibly a saloon for enlisted personnel. The home of Dan Murphy, near his store and adjacent to the post, was the scene of lively social affairs for both Army and civilian folk, and for a very good reason. Mr. Murphy, a widower, had married Mrs. Brady, a widow. Each had four daughters who were first cousins, and the girls in each family had the same names. When the two families were merged there were two Sarahs, two Marys, two Kates and two Ellens, all in the household, and they were lively and pleasant young people. Mrs. J. W. Merrill was well acquainted with them and recounted for us their names and relationship.

Dan Murphy, the man of many daughters, decided that he would have a town as a namesake. He owned a fine water spring just north of the present town of Alpine, which was then called Osborne. The new railroad wanted water from

the spring. Dan consented to give the railroad company a ninety-nine year lease on the spring if they would change the name to Murphyville. And so it was called for a while, but eventually citizens changed the name to Alpine. Daniel O. Murphy was born in Cork, Ireland, February 5, 1832, and died November 15, 1902. He was buried near the Fort Davis Catholic Church and later his remains were removed to the cemetery to make way for a town street.

With the troops of 1867 came Whitaker Keesey, a Virginian, as civilian head baker, and Sam R. Miller as butcher. Both names became well known, and Keesey later became the leading merchant of Fort Davis. Retired, he died there in 1918.

With the conclusion of the Indian troubles, civilization to the eastward in Texas made a sweep to the Davis Mountains country in the early 1880's to profit by the fighting and dying that other men had done to clear the land of danger. Hope was leading, and the eternal Anglo-Saxon instinct to "go west" to find out where the sun slept was pushing at the backs of their wagons. Many of these were cattlemen, but these comers were not the first cattlemen by any means. Webster and Dutchover had cattle almost from the first. Dutchover at times had as many as fifty milk cows and sold milk to the post from two huge tin cans. His ranch was down Limpia Canyon from town, just below the apple orchards that exist now. His son, Ed Dutchover, still owns a portion of it.

The reader will remember that Webster and Dutchover arrived with the first stagecoach and became the first white settlers of Fort Davis. Dutchover's name occurs many times in connection with the history of the fort and the town. In addition, his personal history is unique.

In 1842 a youth by the name of Anton Diedrick in Antwerp, Belgium, by chance witnessed a murder. Immediately thereafter he was shanghaied on board a tramp sailing vessel. For several years he was kept a virtual prisoner on the ship. Eventually at Galveston he jumped ship and a short time thereafter signed on as an American soldier in the Mexican War. He not understanding English and the recruiting sergeant not speaking Dutch, there was mutual difficulty as to his name. Finally the sergeant said to his assistant, "Well, he



BRIGADIER GENERAL B. H. GRIERSON



DIEDRICK DUTCHOVER AND FAMILY

is Dutch all over We'll call him that." So he was enlisted as Diedrick Dutchallover. Some years later he found the name "Dutchallover" too cumbersome and dropped out the "all" to become "Dutchover."

In 1850 we found him on Limpia Creek acting as a guard for the stagecoach. He continued to work for the mail company for many years. He established a small sheep ranch five miles down Limpia Canyon from the post, and from then until the end of the Indian wars was one of those who was consistently harassed by those marauders. We have heretofore mentioned his narrow escape during the Confederate years. After the Federal troops returned he was employed by the quartermaster at Fort Davis as a hauling contractor to haul heavy rafters from Sawmill Canyon to the post. He had a corral for his oxen in Sawmill Canyon, and nearby a squad of soldiers were customarily stationed to protect the sawmill and the workers. Notwithstanding the presence of the troops, the Apaches one night slipped into the canyon and drove off thirty of the oxen. This was only one of many stock payments that Dutchover unwillingly contributed to the Indians.

Dutchover in the early days married a Spanish woman from El Paso, and, in spite of the Indians, they managed to raise their family. Years later, in 1942, when the nation in war called upon its citizens to register with the Ration Boards, forty-two Dutchovers placed their names on the list in the town of Fort Davis, and there were other descendants of Dutchover and his wife living in Marfa, Balmorhea, El Paso and New Mexico. Many of these of the second and third generation are blond and blue-eyed like their Dutch ancestors.

Dutchover died in Fort Davis on March 12, 1904.

In 1878 a soldier arrived at Fort Davis who left quite an impression on this section — Ordnance Sergeant Charles Mulhern. Mulhern was born in County Donegal, Ireland, and enlisted in Company C, Fourth U. S. Cavalry, May 1, 1855. His regimental commander for a time after the Civil War was Robert E. Lee. Mulhern served thirty years in the Army, until his retirement in 1885. The bundle of his discharge papers for his numerous enlistments show him always as an "honest, intelligent, sober and capable soldier."

As a soldier Mulhern saved his money. Appointed ord-

nance sergeant in 1873, he saved more. He bought cattle. On the 4th day of July, 1879, his family, including Robert D. Mulhern, reached Fort Davis. Sergeant Mulhern never left Fort Davis after that for military duty elsewhere.

The histories of Sergeant Mulhern and General Grierson have one striking thing in common — they are the only Fort Davis soldiers who acquired extensive holdings of land in the county. Both got good-sized ranches there and part of that land is still in Mulhern and Grierson titles. A sergeant and a general with similar foresight and business ability! Mulhern became a naturalized citizen on February 23, 1891. Afterward he served as a commissioner of Jeff Davis County. He died in Fort Davis, a white-haired man, on December 28, 1925, past ninety years of age.

Young Bob Mulhern returned to Fort Griffin and drove his father's nearly one hundred head of cattle to Fort Davis in 1881. George Crosson had already had cattle up in Limpia Canyon for two or three years, as had a few other men. The ruins of Crosson's rock house may still be seen a few miles from town. It was built with loopholes for standing off Indians.

The year 1883 was drouthy. That year a whole army of cowmen driving their herds from farther east in Texas arrived west of the Pecos in the Davis Mountains and Big Bend country. They kept on coming through the "Cattle Eighties." Among outstanding names having some connection with the post or other special significance were Henry Harrison Powe, a one-armed Confederate veteran; Pat Dolan, coming back in 1884 with blooded Durham cattle after having come with the reoccupation troops in 1867; in 1883, four McCutcheon brothers, Beau, Willis, William and James; Nick Mersfelder in 1881; Robert S. Sproul in 1886; William T. Jones, William L. Kingston, S. A. Thompson, Tiburcio Granado, José Salsido, Felipe Dominguez. Abbott & Davis, post traders, had cattle in these years. A. C. Sender, another merchant, recorded a brand in 1887. Dan Murphy dealt some in cattle. G. S. Locke was another comer in the eighties.

In 1881 David Merrill and his son, Jesse W., of Illinois, came, liked the country, and returned in 1883 to stay. On his first visit, a total stranger, Jesse was selected by a posse

to go and help search for a missing man, and today that story is local history.

The missing person was a young fellow named Horace Oliver Powe. He was the nephew and adopted son of Henry Harrison Powe, the one-armed Confederate veteran who was later killed over "the steer branded murder." Young Powe was a hard worker through the week, with cattle up in the high Limpia country, but on week ends he liked to put on his dress-up clothing and come down to town and the post. He was popular, and on a certain night was invited to attend a *baile* at the post. He dated a gal, as would be said today, but he failed to show up at the dance.

Two or three weeks later, with Powe never having appeared, and at somebody's urging, the group of searchers that included Jesse Merrill rode up-canyon. They found young Powe, covered with February snow, sitting against a big boulder, with eleven bullets through his body.

The work of Indians? But Grierson had eliminated them, it was supposed. Besides, Powe's knife, rifle and scalp were there, and Indians wouldn't have left them. The rifle had an empty cartridge in the chamber. Nearby woodcutters were suspected, but nothing could be pinned on them; they had no motive, and why should they have used up eleven expensive cartridges? Powe's horse and saddle were missing and never were found. Powe had a neighbor who was missing, with *his* horse and saddle, and he was never seen nor heard of again. Had he killed Powe? There was no known animosity between them. The mystery was never cleared up.

The canyon where Powe was found has long been called Dead Man's Canyon. It heads on the mountainside just below McDonald Observatory. The Scenic Loop road crosses it in a sharp elbow turn just below where it heads. It twists downward and west and south and joins Limpia Canyon above the lower U-Up-and-Down ranch house a mile or two.

Another newcomer in 1883, was Mrs. M. B. Anderson from Kentucky, who came to organize and teach the public school. Of this she has written in *Frontier Times* magazine, and we quote:

"My mother came a year before to visit my brother, who had the contract to furnish beef for the troops. She was so

pleased with the climate and people and scenery that she wished me to come and take the school at \$75 a month."

She wrote of many interesting things about the school. Some Army children attended. One amusing incident concerned inattentiveness to books. The pupils were given to watching the life of the town through the school windows in study hours. Mrs. Anderson often told them to pay attention to their books, but that if an organ grinder ever came with a monkey she would let them all go outside to see. And, to her complete surprise, an organ grinder did show up one day in this remote frontier town, and the children did literally go out through the windows and doors.

Mrs. Anderson resided in Fort Davis almost continuously from her arrival until her death on November 3, 1938. She was an important person in the community for many years, not only being the first teacher but also postmistress. In spite of her busy life, she kept up her social contacts and many times was seen to harness a pony to a phaeton and drive over to the Fort to make social calls on her friends. Her daughter married Jesse W. Merrill, one of the outstanding ranchers of the Trans-Pecos.

In 1882 what is now the Southern Pacific Railroad was built through the land. Likewise the Texas & Pacific was building to the northward. The Southern Pacific construction crew arrived at what is now Valentine on Valentine's Day, 1882. Trains were running by early 1883. They made a great difference to westward travel and in the transportation of Army supplies and mail. A telegraph line was strung from the post to Marfa.

The territory of Presidio County was organized May 12, 1871, with Fort Davis as the seat. With trains tooting through Marfa in 1883, men began to say that it would be much better if Marfa were the county seat. The talk culminated in an election July 14, 1885, and, regardless of the ballot count and the law on the subject, the county seat was moved to Marfa. There was much controversy about it. People who remained in Fort Davis retaliated by organizing a new county. This was accomplished by an act of the Legislature March 15, 1887, which named the new county Jeff Davis. It was formally organized on May 24, 1887. It has an area of 2,263 square miles — larger than Rhode Island or Delaware. Fort Davis

is said to be the only Texas town that has been the seat of two counties.

Eventually uncertainty arose as to the exact location of the line between Presidio and Jeff Davis—which county should tax exactly what lands. The two counties agreed on a survey. Jeff Davis chose Jesse W. Merrill, an experienced surveyor. Presidio chose S. A. Thompson, also an experienced surveyor, living in Fort Davis. The line that exists today was run in January, 1905, by those two men.

By 1886 the cattle that had been coming in from the eastward for several years were scattered all over creation. Men scarcely knew where their cattle were or just what they owned. In August of that year cattlemen organized the first great public roundup. About seventy-five owners and their cowboys rode away from the south side of the Davis Mountains. Some began the cattle gathering in the Shafter country, while others rode clear on to the Rio Grande. This writer has heard something of the story from two men who were in it—Jesse W. Merrill and W. T. (Bill) Jones, now living in Marfa.

Cattle of those days have been described as “just Texas cattle”—some Longhorns, with all sorts of mixtures—red, black, spotted, lineback. Better strains began to be introduced into the herds in the early part of this century, with the result that today some of the choicest range Herefords in the United States are found in this area.

It has been said that in those early days quite a few men came here with horses, cowboys and ropes to start up in the cattle business. There is no record of wholesale grand jury indictments.

Fort Davis never was a wild town. Oh, it had its killings, of course, but never “a dead man for breakfast,” as is said of gold mining towns and Kansas cattle towns where “bad men” and two-gun Petes served up the corpses regularly.

There is but one boothill grave in Fort Davis. That is a word used to designate the cemeteries in the wild-west-woolley towns where victims of the gunmen were buried “with their boots on.” In Fort Davis’ boothill lie two young men, boys, really, named Frier. One was Jube; the first name of the other was not obtained even at the inquest, which was

conducted September 29, 1896, by Justice of the Peace and Coroner Nick Mersfelder.

The boys were overtaken, by Rangers and other officers, with stolen horses. They met their finish making a stand on a hill in a canyon off Limpia Canyon about twenty miles from Fort Davis. That gash in the mountains is today called Horse Thief Canyon. This writer has talked about the affair with one man who was in it, the late Mead Wilson of Presidio County. And this writer also has the inquest docket setting forth the circumstances from the legal viewpoint. The two boys were brought to town and buried, with prayer by a qualified person. The grave with a single wooden marker — both bodies went into the same excavation — is just out of town on the road to Alpine, on the right side, southeast of the group of dwellings there, or almost northwest of the rocky crag of Dolores Mountain. It is an inconspicuous site not easily found.

The first case in that old inquest docket is dated July 7, 1887, just a short time after Jeff Davis County was organized. It now has 63 cases recorded in it of deaths by homicides, accident, suicide, natural causes and unknown causes, just three more than an average of one a year. The docket is still in use, with many more pages to go.

The Jeff Davis County Courthouse and jail was built in 1911, and there has never been a native-born Anglo-American boy or man confined behind its steel door.

CHAPTER 13

DOLORES

DOLORES WAS BEAUTIFUL, with soft, appealing brown eyes like those of a young doe wounded unto death; and no princess ever carried herself with statelier grace than this lowly Mexican girl who dwelt in an adobe hut in the dingy little settlement of "Chihuahua" on the outskirts of the town of Fort Davis.

José, the goatherd, was her sweetheart, and he tended his flock on the side of the mountain a few miles from town. Sometimes he would be gone for days at a time with the flock, and he and Dolores had agreed that during his absence each would, from time to time, light a signal fire as an assurance of their love and fidelity. Dolores would build her fire on the low flat mountain just south of town, and José would build his on some peak near his flock.

The wedding day had been set, the little adobe house which was to be their home had been built and the rude furnishings placed therein. With patient fingers Dolores had taken the last stitch in her simple wedding gown, and all the young people in the Mexican settlement were eagerly awaiting the wedding.

But it was not to be.

One day, as José was watching his flocks in a rocky glen near Musquiz Canyon, the Indians came and killed and scalped him. When he did not return home, a search party went out and found his body, and, instead of a marriage, there was a funeral. Dolores, yesterday a bright-eyed laughing girl, now looked into the face of her dead lover with

burning tearless eyes and followed his body to the grave with listless step, like a ghost "doomed for a certain time" to walk the earth.

None of the homely duties she was wont to perform in her father's house was neglected, but thereafter every Thursday night, with a bundle of fagots over her shoulder, she crept away from the merry crowd who gathered in the little settlement to talk and laugh and sing Spanish love songs, and went up the mountain to light a fire and commune with her dead.

"In all kinds of weather I have watched this light of Dolores, sometimes like a trembling star in that wonderful Texas moonlight that glorifies even the humblest objects; again, when the sharp breath of the norther chilled the blood and almost paralyzed the senses; or, when the bugler at the garrison sent forth the sweet notes of 'Taps' and the gentle wind bore on its palpitating bosom the dear, familiar words of 'Love, good-night' to the ears of the sorrowing Dolores, far up the mountain side, where under the glittering stars she kept bright for hours the fire kindled in memory of her dead sweetheart." So wrote Belle Marshall Locke, whose husband owned the U-Up-and-Down Ranch in the Davis Mountains, on which is situated Mount Locke and the great McDonald Observatory. Mrs. Locke had been an actress, and in 1885 Major W. H. Clapp of the Sixteenth Infantry, U.S.A., then stationed at Fort Davis, wrote a poem about the story of Dolores for Mrs. Locke to use in a recital to be given at the Fort. The poem may win no awards for rhythm or meter, but certainly it should for sentiment.

The long vigil of Dolores, however, did not end with the writing of Major Clapp's poem. In the fall of 1893, when the Janes family was visiting at the ranch of General B. H. Grierson, the party noticed a small flickering light on the top of the flat mountain. Mrs. Janes asked the General what the light was, and he told her the story of Dolores and the fire she burned for her dead lover. A day or so later the General passed Mrs. Janes in town and said: "Well, Dolores will build no more fires for José. She is dead."

Dolores is buried in a little cemetery at the foot of the mountain near the steep path which her feet had worn on the mountainside through her years of devotion to her dead lover. The cemetery has been abandoned, is overgrown with

weeds and brush, and is all but forgotten. But the mountain that lifts to the skies above Dolores bears her name, Dolores Mountain. It is about a half mile southeast of the Court House at Fort Davis on the right side of the Alpine Road. On its summit some years ago this writer found an abundance of old charcoal, no doubt the remains from her fires. Mrs. Janes, who was a photographer, and Mrs. Locke are gone. Mrs. Locke was last in Fort Davis in the autumn of 1925, a beautiful white-haired, lively and gracious lady, who loved the old Fort days of long ago.

The poem written by Major Clapp and recited by Mrs. Locke in 1885 is as follows:

DOLORES

By MAJOR W. H. CLAPP

Beside a Post, on the far frontier
Has grown up a village, quaint and queer;
In its straggling rows of mud *jacals*
With flat earth roofs, where the Mexican dwells,
Where the sun-dried bricks are the same today
As those that were made of Egyptian clay
By the weary Israelite long ago,
And piled with labour near the flow
Of the patient Nile; And even their name
Remains — as then — forever the same.
Adobes still — although the name
Has been carried across the sea to Spain;
Then far to the land of the Aztec where
The soldiers and monks built missions fair.
Mummied old word it seems to be,
Coming so far across the sea,
Picturing now as it pictured then,
The rude endeavors of barbarous men.
In this frontier village in far Southwest,
With its mud-walled homes, where even the best
Are meager and poor, lives a motley crew
Of Mexicans, Negroes, and a few
Frontier Americans here and there,
The ne'er-do-wells of a race more fair.

In one poor hovel there dwells alone
A withered old woman whose face has grown
Haggard and yellow; her hair is grey,
And her journey through life a weary way.
Her eyes to the future seem to cling,
As though waiting, alas! for some distant thing
That is long in coming; and yet, 'tis said,
She was beautiful once and was soon to wed,
That her step was agile and full of grace,
Her laugh, sweet music; and in her face
Was the charm of youth, with never a trace
Of sorrow or care — the pride of her race.
Dolores, they called her, and failed to see
In this sorrowful name its prophecy.

Her lover was manly and strong of limb;
He knew the trails in the mountain grim,
And his rifle was never known to fail,
Or his sight grow dim when on the trail
Of the thieving Indian who lurked around
And murdered and scalped whenever he found
An unarmed party, or one too slow.
But this was thirty long years ago.
Thirty long years since one autumn day
José, with his rifle and mustang grey,
Stopped at the door goodbye to say
To gentle Dolores, that fatal day.
Her eyes grew dim, and in gentle tones
She besought her lover with tears and groans
To abandon the journey. Alas! that he
Had not her vision somewhere to see
In heeded omen the fearful fate
Which he dared that day, and e'er too late
Take note of the pain in her warning eyes
And interpret aright her heart's sad sighs.
What is that power to the loving given
Sometimes to see from their fond hearts riven
The cherished form that is far away,
Compelling a sigh when others are gay?
Or to feel, when danger is near,
The shuddering touch of a nameless fear?

A voiceless feeling, a speechless dread,
Like the sigh of a soul to a dead soul wed?
A few there are to whom it speaks
In unsyllabled words, and ever seeks
To carry a warning, with spirit breath,
And hinder the icy hand of death.

José rode off with a last goodbye
And hardly noticed the sorrowful sigh
That parted the lips of Dolores; then
Turned his mustang's head to the rocky glen
Of the Musquiz Canyon, famed alway
For its fatal deed in Indian fray.
She watched; he came not. The second day,
A goatherd, following the stony way
That led to the canyon, found him dead
Where his mustang fell in the rocky bed.
He was pierced with arrows and scalped, alas!
While near at hand the trampled grass
Showed where an Indian ambushade
Had lain and watched and finally made
An end of his life. There is nothing strange
In an end like this for those who range
The western border and scout the plain,
For many have never come back again;
Nor that to those who have lovers and friends
There ever is sorrow when strong life ends,
And ever a moan for a life that is done;
For each unknown man is somebody's son.
All that remained of poor José
Was carried back to the Fort that day
And kindly buried; but with it lay
The heart of Dolores. Not a ray
Of hope remained. She made no moan,
Nor shed a tear, but sadly, alone,
With downcast eye and sigh of pain,
She took up life's irksome cares again.

She did such duties as near her lay,
Yet never again from that fatal day
Was seen to smile; and her widowed heart

Lived henceforth from the world apart;
While ever her sad voice seemed to be
Sweet as some far-off minstrelsy.
More than fifteen hundred times since then
She has wended her way up the flinty glen,
And high above yon torrent's bed
Has kindled a flame to her long lost dead.
Once each week when the darkness falls,
With a reverent love that never palls,
With trembling footsteps and tear-stained cheek,
She goes to the mountain, there to seek
In the fitful flame, perchance to find
The face of her lover, or hear in the wind
The sound of his voice. The night may be wet
And bitter, and cold. And even yet,
When the norther's breath in an hour or less
Chills with its shivering, wild caress
The heart of its victim, she goes the same,
Heedless of weather or weary frame,
And kindles anew in the silent night
The flickering flame of her beacon light;
Watches it brighten, then fade and die;
Then homeward turns with a weary sigh.

Think of it, ye who mourn today,
Who beside the graves of your dead still pray,
Who doff your mourning in one short year,
And forget, in that time, the tear-stained bier
Of those you lost; then remember, please,
How patient and faithful, on bended knees,
Dolores mourned in the far Southwest;
Then say, if you will, who loved the best.

CHAPTER 14

CURTAINS FOR THE FORT

WITH THE INDIANS gone, the question arose whether there was any need for a military post in the Davis Mountains. A member of the Senate Military Affairs Committee, Senator Proctor of Vermont, arrived to investigate the matter and to recommend whether the site should be purchased and, if not, whether the Fort should be continued or closed up. The Senator arrived in the western desert country wearing a frock-tailed coat and a silk top hat. It did not take him long to decide that the Fort was no longer needed in such a country one hundred miles from the border, and so the War Department inactivated it. The five troops of the Eighth Cavalry stationed there were changed to other posts, and on July 31, 1891, Captain George P. Borden and his men of Company F, Fifth Infantry, marched out down the dusty road to Marfa and there entrained for their next assignment. They were the last soldiers officially stationed at Fort Davis, although in later years small detachments and even companies, batteries, troops, and regiments camped overnight or for a few days on hikes and maneuvers in training for later wars. The only man living in Fort Davis today who saw military service at the old post is Anton Aggerman, a native of Bohemia. After two "hitches" in the service, he received his discharge from the Sixteenth Infantry in the late '80's. He was 88 years old on January 19, 1947 — the "last soldier of old Fort Davis."

Before leaving the strictly military history of the Fort, let us take a glance back and check up on the various commanding officers. The first, of course, was Lieutenant Colonel Washington Seawell, who has been referred to in some detail.

He and Lieutenant Colonel Wesley Merritt, who came immediately after the Civil War, were the builders of the Fort. Colonel Merritt was born in New York in 1836, was graduated from West Point in 1855 and assigned to the dragoons. He fought through the Civil War with the Army of the Potomac, participating in the battles of Gettysburg, Yellow Tavern, Five Forks, etc., and in the latter part of the war accompanied General Sheridan and commanded a cavalry division in the Shenandoah campaign. He commanded a corps of cavalry in the Appomattox campaign and was one of three commanders who arranged with Confederate commanders for the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia. After the Civil War, in 1867, he was assigned to Fort Davis, which he rebuilt and where he participated in the Indian campaigns. From 1882 to 1887 he was superintendent of the U. S. Military Academy. In May, 1898, he was placed in command of the U. S. forces in the Philippine Islands and remained there until summoned to the peace conference in Paris in December, 1898. He retired in 1900, having served with distinction in all his country's wars for forty-five years. He died in 1910.

A notation of the War Department says that other commanding officers of the Fort after the Civil War were Colonel Edward Hatch, Lieutenant Colonel William R. Shafter, Colonel G. L. Andrews, Major Zeno Bliss, and Colonel (later Major General) B. H. Grierson. The exact period when each of these men was in command is a bit uncertain, but soon after Colonel Merritt was transferred, Colonel William Rufus Shafter, better known as "Pecos Bill," appeared on the scene. He had a distinguished record in the Civil War, commanded troops at Cuba during the Spanish-American War, and was retired in 1901 with the rank of Major General.

It seems that during Shafter's command at the post there was a lull in the Indian fighting and post life became rather monotonous for the men. This gave them more time to think about themselves and complain about their condition. One day Colonel Shafter was sitting on the porch of No. 7, the Colonel's house, when a soldier walked across the parade ground from the barracks holding a tin plate with a scanty

supply of meat and vegetables on it. He saluted; then, trembling with indignation, he displayed it before the eyes of the officer.

"Sir," he exclaimed, "this is my dinner!"

The Colonel leaned forward in his easy chair, took a look at the rather meager contents of the plate, and said: "Well, eat it, then; I have had mine."

Without a word the soldier saluted and went back to the barracks. Presumably he continued his cursing, now including the Colonel as well as the service.

As soon as the man was gone, Shafter sent for the captain of that company. "Sir," he demanded of the captain, "how much money have you in your mess fund?"

The captain was of a saving nature and he proudly responded: "Eighteen hundred dollars, Colonel."

"Well, sir," said Colonel Shafter, "change that eighteen hundred dollars into provisions for your company and do it damn quick."

Undoubtedly from time to time there were other officers acting in command of the post during the absence of the accredited commander; but of the entire list, next to Seawell and Merritt, the best known, both because of the extensive Indian campaigns he conducted and because he settled in Fort Davis, is General Grierson.

Born in Pennsylvania July 8, 1826, he was living in Illinois when the Civil War broke out and he fought through the war on the Union side as an officer of the Illinois Volunteers. He served under Grant in Mississippi, and as a cavalry officer in 1863 conducted a movement which the military records of the time referred to as Grierson's raid. At the close of the Civil War he was Major General of the Volunteers and was inducted into the regular Army as Colonel of the Tenth Cavalry on July 28, 1866, and he served until he retired on July 8, 1890, at Fort Davis, at which time he was a Brigadier General. At the time of his retirement the officers of his regiment presented him with a marvelously fine saber made by Tiffany of New York, now in the possession of his son, George Grierson. It bore the names of the five western states in which the General had fought Indians, and it had the inscription, "We need more cavalry and a Grierson to command them. General Ulysses S. Grant."

General Grierson died at Jacksonville, Illinois, August 31, 1911.

A few odds and ends and bits of history remain to be chinked in to complete the picture of old Fort Davis.

Eight miles southeast of Fort Davis on the Alpine road stand the last remains of the adobe buildings of the old Musquiz ranch. About forty years ago two men driving cattle on a cold and windy day were passing the ruins and they came upon a newly opened grave. They sent word to Fort Davis and several of the citizens, including H. A. King, W. E. Bogle, and George Gleim, went to the scene. Chalky, disintegrating bones lay on the heap of earth, and nearby were fine silver handles of a coffin. There was no body, and the fine wood of the coffin was badly dry-rotted. Beneath the coffin there was an indentation, or matrix, in the shape of a vessel, or as some said, a crock. Footprints nearby indicated that a man, a woman in high-heeled shoes, and a burro had been there. These footprints were followed for some distance, but were soon lost. Nothing more has ever been learned about it, but the supposition has always been that some members of the Musquiz family returned with a treasure map. Signs indicated that the visitors had dug in two or three places before the grave was located and opened, and it had been located at the apex of a triangle marked out from the foundation of the old house. After Manuel Musquiz had left that homesite, he lived for many years near San Carlos, Mexico, and descendants of his are said still to be living in that vicinity.

Speaking of graves recalls the cemetery at the Fort which was used for soldiers who had died or had been killed in line of duty. A report written on April 8, 1873, indicates that at that time there were two post cemeteries, which were described as being northeast of the post buildings. The old cemetery had twenty-eight graves located in two rows, headboards not numbered, and there were no enclosures, no trees, and no shrubbery. The new cemetery was said to be bounded by stones, the graves were in one row, and all had numbered headboards. Doubtless the old part had been used by the Army before the Civil War and the new part after the rebuilding in 1867. In 1891 the Army contracted with

David Merrill to remove from the cemetery all of the bodies with the exception of a soldier who had committed suicide and Indian Emily. Jesse W. Merrill superintended the work of removal, and the remains of the soldiers were reburied in the National Cemetery at San Antonio in April, 1892.

When the Fort was abandoned by the Army, the James family, still the owners of the property, rented many of the buildings for residential purposes. In the ensuing decade or so, many local citizens and some summer visitors lived in the houses in Officers' Row. This was the "Nob Hill" residence district of the town. Walter S. Miller and his family lived some time in No. 6. Their two sons, Espy and Keesey Miller, are still living in the town and have become prominent ranchers and leading citizens of the community. Henry Clay Espy and his family lived in No. 8. His son, Joe W. Espy, still lives in Fort Davis and is one of the leading cattlemen of the Southwest. His parents came to the Davis Mountains in 1891 when he was a boy, and he has said that the drouth was so bad that year that as they approached the mountains they could see the drouth-dead cattle here and there across the plains.

For a few years during the early 1900's cottages were rented to summer visitors, largely from Houston, Galveston and Austin, who came year after year on account of the delightful summer climate. The buildings gradually fell into disrepair and were left to the ravages of wind and sun, uninhabited ruins for the most part, though a few Mexican families continued to dwell in any building, barrack or whatnot, where sufficient roof could be found to keep out the rains. People began to tear down buildings to get stone or the sound old lumber. Many a smaller house in Fort Davis has old Fort lumber in its construction.

Then in the late 1920's the Fort saw a temporary resurgence. Oklahoma oil wealth launched a movement to create a moving picture colony in it with Jack Hoxie, a star of the "Westerns," as the leading man. Hoxie, with a small group, repaired quarters No. 1 and 2, and occupied them for a while; then the financial calamity of 1929 checked the plans and the enterprise evaporated.

The ensuing years saw more vandalism than had taken place through all the previous years. Numerous citizens of

the town endeavored for fifteen years or more to buy the Fort property for a state park or a national monument. At first the heirs of the original John James said they had no desire to sell. Eventually they asked \$32,000 for the property. Sources that might have produced funds to buy it thought that price too high. Just before World War II the Mile High Club of Fort Davis, a social and civic organization still in existence, obtained an option from the James Estate of San Antonio with a \$25,000 price. The war ended that. It will be recalled that the John James Estate had owned the property during all the military years. Back in 1883 the Secretary of War had authorized the purchase of the land for \$20,000, but for some reason the purchase was never made.

In 1945 Mack H. Sproul of Fort Davis, a son of that Robert S. Sproul who came in 1886, purchased the property from the James Estate. Mr. Sproul has lived in Fort Davis all of his life and is a well-known rancher. In 1946 Mr. Sproul sold the Fort property, with the canyon and the two mountains and the old building ruins, to D. A. Simmons, an attorney of Houston.

CHAPTER 15

THE FUTURE OF OLD FORT DAVIS

*I*N 1902 JUDGE D. E. SIMMONS, then first assistant to the Attorney General of Texas, was traveling in West Texas accompanied by his five-year-old son, David Andrew. The Judge stopped at Langtry to visit his friend Roy Bean, "the law west of the Pecos," and then proceeded to Marfa where he was met by Willis and Beau McCutcheon and taken to one of their ranches in the Davis Mountains. They stopped to inspect the old Fort, then in good repair and occupied by some of the town's leading citizens. The little boy's eyes grew round with wonder as he listened to the tales of the Indian Wars.

Forty-four years later the little boy, who had followed in his father's footsteps, came back to Fort Davis for a brief rest and to renew his spirit at the foot of the mountains. He was travel-weary, as he had been that day so many years before when he rode with his father from Marfa in the surrey with the fringed top. But the weariness this time came from sixteen months of travel throughout the length and breadth of the land as President of the American Bar Association and as spokesman for the lawyers of the country. He had served as official legal consultant to the United States delegation at the United Nations Conference at San Francisco in 1945; and had just returned from Santiago, Chile, where he had been chairman of the American delegation to the Fourth Inter-American Law Conference.

He was disturbed to see the ruin which had befallen the old Fort buildings. He had always considered this Fort as the

epitome of the struggle of the pioneer West against the savages. Although in ruins, this was the only Indian fort still intact and unchanged from the days of the border wars, and Mr. Simmons was disturbed because it was closed to the public and was rapidly disintegrating from weather and neglect. His interest in the country had deep roots. His maternal great-grandfather had been killed in a wagon train accident somewhere in the vicinity while on the road to California in 1849, after which the family had turned back and made their home at old Indianola. The Finlay Mountains to the west had been named for his maternal grandfather, Colonel George P. Finlay, who had served in the Mexican War under the command of Jefferson Davis.

Judge Simmons inquired as to the ownership of the Fort property and learned that the land had recently been acquired by Mack H. Sproul as an adjunct to his large ranch and was not for sale. He spent a few days at the Indian Lodge, inspected the Big Bend Park, returned to his law office in Houston, and dismissed the matter of the Fort from his mind — that is, he thought he had. But a few months later he returned to Fort Davis, opened negotiations with Mr. Sproul, and on May 3, 1946, a formal contract of sale was signed by Mack H. Sproul to David A. Simmons. He was the third owner, and the third epoch in the life of the Fort was beginning.

In an address to the Mile High Club of Fort Davis later in the year, he said the first steps to be taken would be to clean up the property, reconstruct a few of the buildings, and open the Fort to the public as a historical and vacation center. When asked by one of the members how long he thought it would take to reconstruct the property, Judge Simmons smiled and said that the first building had been built in 1854 and the last in 1885, thirty-one years later, and he was sure that it would take no longer this time.

He employed R. D. Swartz as construction superintendent and, with the aid of H. Eugene Sproul, son of the former owner, they commenced a general clean-up of the property. First they cleared out the old spring at the cottonwood grove, rebuilding the stone wall with the stones which had fallen into the spring, then rebuilt the fences and commenced a careful survey of the entire property.

Mr. Swartz employed several old time adobe makers and, with a construction crew, carefully removed the walls of No. 4 Barracks, salvaging all usable bricks, and from the indential dirt and gravel re-fashioned new adobe bricks on the cleared ground by the foundation and commenced the rebuilding of the Fort.

At this writing several of the buildings have been put in usable condition and the property will be opened to the public probably by the time this book is published.

Fort Davis is ideally endowed and located to be the vacation resort center in the great Southwest. Its altitude is approximately one mile above sea level, the same as that of Denver. Its latitude is south of Arizona and New Mexico, and it is in the same sunshine belt. The winter climate is milder than that of Santa Fe or Albuquerque to the north. Some winters see no snow at all, and when it does snow, it usually remains on the ground only a few days. It seldom gets really cold in the winter, and when it does it lasts only briefly.

The summer temperatures have been referred to in the chapter on the rebuilding of the Fort, which showed the conditions in 1870. The current *Texas Almanac*, which gives the temperatures of every county in the state, shows that the facts of 1870 are the facts of today. A detailed check of county records shows that Jeff Davis County, with its July mean temperature of 75 degrees, is the coolest spot in Texas in the summer. The summer temperature seldom climbs above 90 degrees, and outdoor recreation is not tiring because the light, dry mountain atmosphere does not possess the humidity of lower altitudes. Nights are uniformly cool. This is due in part to the high altitude and, in part, to the summer showers. Average precipitation is about seventeen inches, although periods of drouth have been mentioned, and once in a great while the rain comes down in torrents. There is a record of a flash flood in 1879 which completely washed away the old telegraph office located just below the Fort on Limpia Creek. The line ran from Fort Concho (now San Angelo) to El Paso, and there was a branch line from Fort Davis to Presidio. After the flood, the telegraph office was moved to the south

side of the Fort. Another double dose of rain fell in 1880, when the quartermaster recorded that it was necessary for his clerks working in the warehouses to keep umbrellas over their workbenches to keep the rain off their ledgers.

The visitor today will find perfect highways and the most beautiful scenery in Texas. In the early days the only roads were those trails made by the wagon wheels and the hoofs of the horses. The first improved road was built through Wild Rose Pass under the direction of Captain Shavley in 1878, and that same year Lieutenant Kendall was grading a rough road through Musquiz Canyon. Instead of the rock trail through Wild Rose Pass and the myriad crossings of the creek up Limpia Canyon and down Musquiz Canyon, we now have hard-surfaced highways with safe and easy grades and curves; and instead of the dangers of Elbow Canyon and Suicide Curve we have paved the Scenic Loop. This scenic highway leaves Fort Davis, passing the old Fort property; as it goes up Limpia Canyon at four miles it passes through the Davis Mountain State Park with its 1500 acres, largely donated by Jesse W. Merrill and the late Richard K. Merrill; thence to the McDonald Observatory on top of Mount Locke, which was dedicated May 5, 1939; thence past the famous Rockpile where there is a roadside park donated by the Reynolds Cattle Company; around Mounts Livermore and Sawtooth; returning to Fort Davis on the south side of the mountains through Skillman's Grove where the Bloys Association has held its annual cowboy camp meeting each year since 1890. The idea of the Scenic Loop was first suggested by former state Senator Thomas B. Love in September, 1926, in the Directors' room of the Fort Davis State Bank, and the last gap in the seventy-five mile scenic drive was completed and paved in the spring of 1947.

The mountains, while not as high or rugged as those in the Rockies to the northwest, have a beauty and grandeur all their own. They have a softer look, due to the far-famed grama grass that grows at their foot and up the slopes, and to the variety of shrubs and trees that grow in the canyons and high on the mountains. The town is at the very foot of the mountains, being in the shadow of Sleeping Lion Mountain, from whose top one can look down into the box canyon and see all the buildings of the Fort. A short distance to the rear

looms Blue Mountain, 7330 feet high and easily identified by the bluish haze surrounding it. Across the canyon to the north is Spring, or Black, Mountain, 7550 feet. Far to the west it Sawtooth, 7748 feet, and in the center of the range, Mount Livermore, 8382 feet, the highest mountain from Jeff Davis County eastward to the Alps. It has been called variously Baldy Peak, Apache Peak, Crown Mountain, and Boulder Peak, but the name of Colonel Livermore, the Army engineer who mapped the region, appears to be permanently attached to it.

Situated as it is on a modern highway halfway between Carlsbad Caverns to the north and Big Bend Park to the south, Fort Davis, with its Scenic Loop completed and the old Fort opened to the public, is destined to be a major vacation land throughout the year. Those who seek rest and relaxation will find the cool, delightful climate of Fort Davis quite pleasant, and the rolling mountain scenery soothing. Those more active will enjoy motoring over the Scenic Loop, hiking, climbing the nearby mountains, horseback riding over the trails, swimming at Balmorhea Pool, the largest outdoor pool in the United States, which is located a short distance down Limpia Canyon, and, in season, hunting deer and antelope.

All will want to see the sights at old Fort Davis, the ruins of the chapel, the Colonel's House where the first Christmas tree in West Texas was decorated in 1867 and in which Indian Emily died, Emily's grave and the state monument, the cottonwood grove and spring, Hospital Canyon, the rare Madrona trees in Powderhouse and Madrona Canyons, Sleeping Lion and Simmons Mountains, both on the property, and the curious rock formations in the mountains, such as the Praying Nun, the Devil's Bathtubs, the Giant's Glove, Betty's Sniffing Bear, and others.

Wouldn't that ancient Spaniard, Tony Espejo, stop and scratch his sandaled foot in mild surprise at the things to be seen since last he passed that way?

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